COMMENTARY ON THE MUNDAKA UPANISHAD

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ABOUT THIS EDITION

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Chapter 1

SECTION 1

This is the Mundaka Upanishad – very interesting.

Brahmā devānām prathamaḥ sambabhūva viśvasya kartā bhuvanasya goptā, sa brahma-vidyāṁ sarva-vidyā-pratiṣṭham arthavāya jyeṣṭha-putrāya prāha (1.1.1). Artharvaṇe yām pravadeta brahmātharvā tām purovācāṅgire brahma-vidyam, sa bhāradvājaya satyavāhāya prāha bhāradvājo'ngirase parāvarām (1.1.2). Brahma, the Creator, who was the first born among all evolutes in the process of the manifestation of God Almighty, the creator of this world and the protector of all beings, taught Brahma Vidya – the science of Brahman, which is the origin, the support, and the foundation of every other learning, every other Vidya or science or art – to his eldest son Atharva, a great sage. Artharva taught this Knowledge that he received from Brahma to another sage, called Angi. This great sage Angi, who received it from Atharva, who received it from Brahma, gave this Knowledge to Bharadvaja, another great sage. This is the line of the descent of this Knowledge. Bharadvaja, also known as Satyavaha, taught this once again to Angiras, the wisdom of Paravara, the high and low. This Knowledge includes everything that is here and also everything that is not here. The highest Reality as it is in itself and also the reality manifest in the form of creation is Para-Avara. This Brahma Vidya is the Knowledge and study of this great Reality which appears as Para and Avara, the high and the low at the same time.

An assembly of all the sages is reported to have been frequently held in a place called Naimisharanya. These sessions took place many times, and the teachings of the Epics and Puranas, and the great scriptures, were given by great teachers such as Sutapuranica, who is the speaker in the Mahabharata as well as the Puranas. And one of the sages assembled there listening to these discourses was Saunaka.

We will find that in the Puranas the questioner is always Saunaka. Saunaka was a great sage who performed large

sacrifices, and his sacrificial ground was very big. Therefore, he was called Saunaka Mahashala. *Shala* is the sacrificial ground, and *mahashala* means a large ground, even kilometres long. At least hundreds and hundreds of *yagnas* and sacrifices did Saunaka Maharishi perform, and usually these discourses were conducted in the very place where the *yagnas* were held. On one side of the *pandal* or tent of the *yagnashala*, the actual *havan*, *yagna*, sacrifice would be performed by the appointed priests, and on the other side discourses would be going on. Even the recitation of the Mahabharata by Vaishambayana was done on the sacrificial ground.

Janamejaya performed a Sarpa Yaga, a *yagna* which he undertook to vindicate the death of his father Parikshit, who died on account of a snake bite. Janamejaya's anger towards snakes was such that when he heard that his father died in that way, he determined to end the species completely and conducted a *yagna* called Sarpa Yaga, which did not succeed in the end on account of some interference. At that time Vyasa was present, and he told his disciple Vaishampayana to tell the whole story of the Mahabharata to Janamejaya, who was eager to know what exactly happened to his forefathers the Pandavas, whose progeny was Parikshit, his father. Similarly, the Puranas were recited by Suta, a learned sage in the Naimisharanya forest, which is near the modern Neemsar, somewhere around Sitapur.

Saunaka, the great sage, the Mahashala, the performer of large sacrifices, stood up in the assembly and queried the great sage Angiras, who received this Brahma Vidya through a descending line of teaching commencing from Brahma, the Creator himself. Humbly, respectfully, in a traditional manner, this great sage Saunaka Mahashala approached Angiras, the great master who was in the audience. He put a question. What is the question? Great Master, holy Sage, kasmin nu bhagavo vijñāte sarvam idaṁ vijñātam bhavati iti (1.1.3): What is that, by knowing which, one can know everything else also?

Is it possible to know something which can lead to the knowledge of all things at the same time? Generally, such a thing is not possible. If you know one thing, you will know only that thing. The knowledge of 'A' does not involve the knowledge of 'B', because 'A' cannot be 'B'. One thing cannot be another thing; it is a law of contradiction in logic. So what is this question? A supernatural question is raised by Saunaka Mahashala: What is that thing which will, at the same time, mean the knowledge of all things? It was a simple question, leading to an answer which is the entire Upanishad.

To the sage who queried in this manner, the master Angiras speaks. Tasami sa hovāca: dve vidye veditavye iti ha sma yad brahmavido vadanti, parā caivāparā ca (1.1.4): Two kinds of knowledge are to be acquired – dve vidye – the higher and the lower. We have to know what higher knowledge is, and we also have to know lower knowledge. This is what we hear from Brahmavids, the great knowers of Brahman. This is the instruction we have received from the Brahmavid with regard to how knowledge can be acquired or obtained. Knowledge of the lower is important, though lower knowledge is not the same as higher knowledge. The lower knowledge is something like the legs of a human being; and a human being can live even without legs. Legs are not essential to the body, but they are necessary for the body. In a similar manner, the lower knowledge is not going to take us to Brahman, but it is necessary as feet are necessary for us, and its essentials need not be overemphasised with an overwhelming feeling of their importance, giving no credit to that which will lead to that essential knowledge.

All knowledge is the graduated training of the mind in the process of enlightenment. From the perceptible, visible, gross, tangible and acceptable reality, we gradually move the mind to that which is not easily acceptable and cannot be understood as quickly as we can understand that which is seen with the eyes directly. That the Sun is giving light to us, it is now daytime, and the Sun rose at a particular hour in the morning, is something acceptable. But that the Sun gives light to all parts of the world at different times in a very

systematic manner is something that cannot be seen with the eyes directly. It requires a little imagination and intensive study to know this other fact involved in the illumination given by the Sun on the Earth, as it is not actually accessible to vision physically. There are degrees of knowledge, and there are as many degrees of knowledge as there are degrees of the psychic setup of a human being. We have to pass through as many stages of education as are the stages which compose our own mind. The mental degree is also the degree of reality that it will encounter in the process of enlightenment and education. Saunaka put a question regarding what knowledge is, and Angiras said there are two types of knowledge, the lower and the higher. Now we are told what lower knowledge is.

Now listen about lower knowledge. Tatrāparā ṛg-vedo yajur-vedaḥ sāma-vedo'tharva-vedaḥ śikṣā kalpo vyākaraṇaṁ niruktaṁ chando jyotiṣam iti (1.1.5). Very interesting! It gives a blow to the very root of our imagination that the Vedas are the highest knowledge. The Rigveda Samhitas, and everything connected to the Rigveda – the Brahmanas, Yajurveda, Samaveda, Atharvaveda – are all lower knowledge only, my dear friend. There are four Vedas. The Rigveda consists of hymns, prayers, mantras. The Yajurveda consists of certain invocations necessary for the performance of sacrifice. The Samaveda is Rig-verses set in music. The Athavaveda contains such material as may be regarded as a sequel or an appendix to the tri, or the threefold Vedas – Rigveda, Yajurveda and Samaveda.

These four Vedas are not easy to understand. Their language is difficult, their grammar is very hard, and the implications of what they say are so deep that without proper introductory learning, one cannot know what the Vedas speak at all. This introductory training consists of what is called the Vedanga, a sixfold education. The *anga* or the limb of the Veda is sixfold, and we cannot approach the Veda unless we are proficient in these six accessories called the Vedanga.

What are these six Vedangas? Śikṣā kalpo vyākaraṇaṁ niruktaṁ chando jyotiṣam iti (1.1.5). Siksha is the science of phonetics, the art of intonation and modulation of the voice in the recitation of a Veda mantra. You might have heard Panditas chanting mantras of the Veda. It has a way of pronunciation, an articulation, a modulation, and a raising of the voice or a bringing down of the voice, or keeping the voice in a harmonious manner without raising it or bringing it down. These are called the sciences of giving a special meaning to the mantra.

You may be wondering what the great point is in intonating the mantra. "Oh God, protect me." I can say that in any way I like. Why should I sing it in a particular tone? The reason is the Veda mantras are composed in such a way that different intonations give them different suggestions. Even when we speak, our mode of speaking gives a special significance to the words. We can utter a sentence with different voice formations which may mean different things depending on the different ways of expression. Sometimes we gesticulate, and sometimes we change the tone of voice by raising, lowering or modulating it in such a way that conveys different meanings. For instance, when we say something when we are happy or unhappy, or when we are angry or want to abuse somebody, we know how our voice changes. Likewise, a special kind of technique has been adopted by the science of Siksha, attributed to Panini, the great grammarian, which instructs us in the art of the correct intonation and pronunciation of a Veda mantra, especially the first three Vedas – the Rigveda, Yajurveda and Samaveda.

Kalpa means the performance of a ritual connected with a specific injunction of the Veda, especially of the Brahmanas. We have seen Acharyas, Purohitas performing *havana*. While chanting they put something here, there, such as *dharbha* grass here, water there, they will do *achamanam,* wash their hands, put some rice grains there, and so many other things. These are certain techniques of ritual which are elaborately described in Kalpa Sutras. The Kalpa Sutras are of four types:

Shrauta Sutras, Grhya Sutras, Dharma Sutras and Sulba Sutras.

The Shrauta Sutra is a text which describes the manner of the performance of sacrifices according to Vedic injunctions. The Grhya Sutras is connected with sacrifices and performances to be undertaken in one's own house, and not in some big *yagnashala*. The Dharma Sutra is that Kalpa which gives us the rules and regulations of social and ethical life, such as Varnashrama Dharma, etc. The Sulpa Sutras describe the length, measurement, etc., of certain articles that are to be used in Vedic sacrificial methods. These are the four types of Kalpa Sutra.

Vyakarana is grammar. There are two types of grammar – classical grammar and Vedic grammar. In Panini's method both types of grammar are found. Vedic grammar is studied only in advance stages. Students of Sanskrit usually study only classical works and the well-known Vyakarana. Unless we know the technology of the method by which words have been used in the Veda mantras, we will not make any sense out of them, and so Vyakarna, the study of grammar, is necessary.

Nirukta is the etymology of the word, how the word has been formed. Indra, Mitra, Varuna, Agni, this, that – what is actually meant by these words? They have a root. As every word in a language has a root from which it is derived, Vedic words also have a root from where they arise. The Nirukta Shastra of Bhaskaracharya is the great textbook which goes into the details of the etymology of the roots of the words used in the Veda mantras.

Chhanda is the metre. Every verse, every mantra of the Rigveda Samhita particularly, varies in its metre. It is long or short; it is Gayatri Chhandas or Tristubh, and so on, and accordingly the intonation also changes. So, metre is the Chhandas.

Jyotisha is the astronomical science which tells us at what particular time of the conjunction of the stars or the planets we have to undertake a particular ritual or a sacrifice.

It does not mean that on any day we can do some worship and on any day we can do some *havanam*, and so on. A particular *havan* or *yagna* should be done at a particular time, in consonance with the respective conjunction of the planets and the stars. That is Jyotisha, the *shastra* of astronomy.

We cannot go to the Veda directly and understand anything out of it unless we are proficient in these six auxiliary *shastras* or scriptures called śikṣā kalpo vyākaraṇaṁ niruktaṁ chando jyotiṣam. All these, says the great master, together with the original Vedas – Rigveda, Yajurveda, Samaveda and Atharvaveda – should be considered as ways of lower knowledge. They purify our mind, and enlighten us into the mysteries of the whole of creation. They will purify our mind because of the power that is embedded in the mantras and the emotional or religious awareness that is stimulated within us on account of the meaning that we see in the mantra, the blessing that we receive from the sages who composed the mantra, and also the special power that is generated by the metre. All these put together create a religious atmosphere in the person who takes to the study of the Veda. It is great and grand, worth studying. It will lift us to the empyrean of a comprehension of values that are not merely physical but superphysical.

Yet, it is not enough. There is a 'but' behind it. What is that greater knowledge, which is higher than this mentioned? Atha parā yayā tad akṣaram adhigamyate (1.1.5): that is the higher knowledge with which alone can we reach the imperishable Reality. Learning is different from wisdom; scholarship is not the same as insight. One may be a learned Vedic scholar and very proficient in the performance of sacrifices and the invocation of gods in the heavens, but eternity is different from temporality. All these glories of the Veda are in the region of time, and the eternal is timeless. What is that timeless thing, that which is called Imperishable?

Yat tad adreśyam, agrāhyam, agotram, avarṇam, acakṣuḥ-śrotraṁ tad apāṇi-padam, nityam vibhum sarva-gataṁ

susūkṣmaṁ tad avyayam yad bhūta-yonim paripaśyanti dhīrāḥ (1.1.6): That great Reality is to be encountered in direct experience; that Reality which is not capable of perception through the eyes – adreśyam; that which cannot be grasped with a hand – agrāhyam; that which has no origin – agotram; that which has no shape or form – avarnam; which has no sense organs like us – acakṣuḥ-śrotraṁ; no limbs such as feet, hands etc – tad apāṇi-padam; permanent, eternal, all-pervading, subtler than the subtlest – nityam vibhum sarva-gataṁ susūkṣmaṁ; imperishable – tad avyayam; the origin of all beings – bhūta-yonim; paripaśyanti dhīrāḥ – heroes on the path of the spirit will behold that great Reality within their own selves.

Yathorṇa-nābhiḥ sṛjate gṛhṇate ca, yathā pṛthivayām oṣadhayas sambhavanti, yathā sataḥ puruṣāt keśalomāni tathākṣarāt sambhavatīha viśvam (1.1.7). From this Eternal Being, this world, this universe, has emanated. How does the world come from God? We have seen a spider spitting threads from its own body. From its saliva, as it were, threads come out, and it weaves a web around itself. Or we have seen trees spontaneously growing from under the earth, or we have seen hair growing on the head. In some such way is the manner of the creation of this world.

Tathākṣarāt sambhavatīha viśvam. These analogies have some significance of their own. The spider does not create the web from external material. The *upadana* is the same as the *nimitha*, as they say. The instrumental cause is the same as the material cause in the case of the spider weaving a web. In the case of the potter making a pot, the instrumental cause is not the same as the material cause; and so is the case with the carpenter making the furniture. That is to say, the potter does not make the pot out of a substance coming from his body, and so is the case with the carpenter. But in the case of the spider, the creation of the web materially emanates from the very body of the spider, and so here the material cause is identical with the instrumental cause; they are not not two different things. God does not create the world as a carpenter or a potter does; the substance of God is verily present in the

creation. That illustration is brought out by this analogy of a spider creating a web.

Yathā pṛthivayām oṣadhayas sambhavanti: Or another analogy. Trees grow from the earth; they draw sustenance from the earth. The original support of all the trees is the substance of the earth. This analogy tells us that the world is sustained by God, and all the values of the world come from God only, and He is the soul of all that He creates.

There is also the analogy of hair growing. When we behold rocks, stones, inanimate matter existing in this world, we sometimes have difficulty connecting inanimate things with animate consciousness. How can animate, conscious God create inanimate stuff? This analogy brings out the possibility of inanimate things coming from animate consciousness, as hair grows from animate skin and becomes inanimate so that we can shave it off, or dead nails projecting themselves forth from animate roots, and the like. From consciousness, apparently unconscious things can also emanate.

These difficulties are solved by analogies of this kind – namely, a spider's web, the trees growing from the earth, and the hair growing from the body. Like that, please understand that eternity produces temporality. To put it in modern scientific language, the four-dimensional reality creates the three-dimensional world of length, breath and height.

Tapasā cīyate brahma, tato'nnam abhijāyate, annāt prāṇo manaḥ satyaṁ lokāḥ karmasu cāmṛtam (1.1.8). In one verse the whole of creation is described. Brahman, the Supreme Absolute, distends, swells – becomes large, as it were – by *tapas*. *Tapas* means concentration. Brahman's concentration is the will to create. It becomes extended in the form of the contemplated shape of creation, as it were. When we think something, the mind takes the form of that thing which we think. Now the Supreme Absolute thinks, wills, concentrates itself upon the shape which creation has to take, and that is the swelling or the extending or the becoming large of Brahman in *tapas*. The swelling or the extension of being in

tapas also means the increase in the potentiality of the one that concentrates. In the case of Brahman, it would mean the contemplation of the form of the world which has to be created in the future. In the case of people like us, *tapas* would mean the intensity of heat generated inside by the concentration of the mind and the *prana*.

Tapasā cīyate brahma, tato'nnam abhijāyate. Very mystical are these words. The meanings of the terms in the Upanishads of those times are not to be taken in a dictionary sense. They are highly connotative. Here it is mentioned that when Brahman concentrates itself in *tapas*, *anna* is created. From the point of view of ordinary linguistic exposition, *anna* means food, anything that is eaten. But in the Upanishads, *anna* does not mean just what we eat. It is something more than that. The material content of consciousness is called *anna*. The content of the consciousness which takes the shape of the content in the act of concentration creates an *anna* for it. The object of thought is the food of thought. Anything that we think is the diet of the psychic process. And here in the case of Brahman, the potential material, the matrix of all creation – we may call it Mula Prakriti in the language of Sankhya and Vedanta, etc. – there must be some stuff which has to manifest itself in the form of creation. The concretisation of the will itself is the stuff; or rather, *anna* may be taken in the sense of the substantiation of the will of God. It has to take effect. The implementation of the ideation of the Absolute is the food, the content, the shape or the form of this *tapas*. *Anna* is produced in this manner. Cosmic potentiality is created by the concentrating act of Brahman as *tapas*. That is the meaning of tapasā cīyate brahma, tato'nnam abhijāyate. When this potential in the form of a concrete substantiality of will wields itself, it immediately vibrates into the form of the future shape in a more distinct form, with creation as space.

In the Panchadasi we have a very clear-cut description of how this kind of manifestation takes place. Brahman is like a canvas on which somebody paints a picture. It is the background of everything. If we invoke the canvas with some

consciousness, we may imagine that in order to paint on it, the canvas has to concentrate itself on the thickening process that has to take place by applying starch to it, because painting cannot be done on an ordinary cloth. There should not be pores in the canvas. So in order to paint a picture, the cloth of canvas is stiffened with starch. This stiffening is the process of the will, and it is the *anna* that is spoken of here.

Then there is *prana*, the vibration. The painter's mind vibrates in the form of the outline of the picture that it is intending to draw. But if we do not bring the question of the painter in the case of Brahman because Brahman Itself is the painter here, Brahman itself visualises, in the form of the vibratory process of its will, the outline of the creation that has to take place. After the outline is drawn, ink is thrown over it. It is filled with ink. Then the creation is complete. Likewise, there is first of all a will or an idea wherein the painter – or Brahman, in the case of this verse – has the idea of what it has to become, and then it stiffens itself into the will by *tapas*, concentration, as a painter would concentrate on the painting that has to be done, and then there is a vibratory force of *prana*. Here the word '*prana*' indicates the cosmic *prana*, or Hiranyagarbha Tattva. Hiranyagarbha is *prana*, the cosmic vibration of the energy of Brahman through the manifested stuff called *anna* or potentiality. Then there is a further diversification of this concentrated universal *prana* in the form of thinking. We may compare this *manas*, or thinking, of Brahman to Virat Svarupa, which has emanated from the outline of the creative process available in Hiranyagarbha. In the cosmic mind, which is Virat, everything is clear. It is the ink-filled picture, as it were.

Satyaṁ – the words are all very intricate. Their meanings cannot be understood superficially. We have to go deep into the subject, with the help of commentaries. *Satya* is the order and law of the universe that come together with the manifestation of these gods, Hiranyagarbha and Virat. The law and order of the universe are also created simultaneously. The unified integration of the cosmic *prana*,

Hiranyagarbha or Virat, is the principle behind the law and order that has to operate in the manifested universe.

As we have a constitution of a government, it is an integrated thought of the central law authority that manifests itself as diversified forms of manifestation in various departments until it goes to the lowest level of administration. Then the world is created – lokāḥ – the fourteen worlds, which are made up of the five elements of earth, water, fire, air and ether. Karmasu cāmṛtam: Then action proceeds there. That is to say, individuals emerge from this cosmic manifestation of the five elements – earth, water, fire, air and ether; then āmṛta, the fruit of actions.

Thus, how many things are there? Firstly, there is the Supreme Absolute. Secondly, there is *anna*, or the potential for the future manifestation in the form of *tapas*. Thirdly, there is Hiranyagarbha, the vibratory cosmic *prana*. Fourthly, there is thinking, which is the cosmic thought identifiable with Virat. Fifthly, there is law and order. Sixthly, there is the manifestation of the fourteen worlds. Seventhly, there is individuality, the individuals or *jivas*, who are propelled towards action and karma. Eighthly, there is fruit of action. So there are eight degrees: Brahman, Anna, Prana, Manas, Satya, Loka, Karma, Amruta. Look at this wonderful thing! It is like a *sutra*, one thirty-two lettered verse giving us the whole scheme of creation from Brahman to dust. Look at the power of the composer of this mantra. Great thing indeed! Tapasā cīyate brahma, tato'nnam abhijāyate, annāt prāṇo manaḥ satyaṁ lokāḥ karmasu cāmṛtam. Very difficult verse.

Yaḥ sarvajñaḥ sarva-vid yasya jñānamayaṁ tapaḥ; tasmād etad brahma nāma-rūpam annaṁ ca jāyate (1.1.9). That great being is sarvajñaḥ and sarva-vid. According to the commentator, sarvajñaḥ and sarva-vid mean two different things. Though the literal meaning of both words is 'all-knowing', the denotative or the connotative meaning is that being which knows everything in general as also in particular. This is Acharya Sankara's interpretation. God knows everything in general and also in particular.

Somebody asked me a question: “Does God know that a cat is moving in the kitchen?” I said, “He not only knows the movement of the cat, but He also knows how many hairs the cat has.” This is the direct knowledge of even the minutest details of even an atom.

But God does not just dissipate Himself in the knowledge of particulars. There is a general control over the whole of creation, and there He has a cosmic generality of knowledge. A great cosmic order is in His mind. This is the sarvajñaḥ or the generality of the knowledge of God. But the particularity is every little detail, even to counting the number of hairs of a person or the breaths that he breathes. That also is known to Him. Can we imagine what kind of knowledge God must have? How many creatures are there in this creation: gods, human beings, demons, subhuman creatures, insects, and what not? How many leaves on the tree? He will count them. Unimaginable power of comprehension! So God knows everything in general as well as in particular. That is the meaning of being sarvajñaḥ and sarva-vid.

Yasya jñānamayaṁ tapaḥ. We are told that God concentrated Himself. He was doing *tapas*. What kind of *tapas* did He do? Did he perform austerity by starving? His knowledge is His *tapas*. His wisdom, His knowledge, His consciousness, His intention, His purpose, His awareness – that is *tapas*. The knowledge of God is also the action of God. The awareness of God is also the concentration of God. The existence of God is the same as His work. So His *tapas* is knowledge. The greatest *tapas* is the concentration of knowledge, and every other *tapas* is secondary – yasya jñānamayaṁ tapaḥ.

Tasmād etad brahma nāma-rūpam annaṁ ca jāyate. From this great being, Brahman, Absolute, emanates the secondary Brahman. In the language of scholastic philosophers it is *prakriti*, as is mentioned in the Bhagavadgita. Here Brahma does not mean supreme Brahman but *prakriti*, the matrix of things. Then name and form manifest themselves – nāma-rūpam. The inward characteristic of an object is called *nama*,

and its outward characteristic is called *rupa*. The indication, the determining factor of a particular shape that an individual has to take is called *linga sharira* in our case, and the subtle body is called the *sukshma sharira*. Here, *nama* does not simply mean a name such as Rama, Krishana and Govindha; it is the indicative *linga*, or the specific character, of the would-be individual in the form of a body. *Rupa* is the actual physical form. Thus, the subtle and the physical shapes emanate as *nama* and *rupa* from this original Brahma, Mula Prakriti. Annaṁ ca jāyate: The field of action is created. Here *anna* means actual matter is the field of particular individual action for the *jivas* to reap their fruits according to their deeds. This is also a great verse. In one verse so many things are there.

These nine verses constitute one section of the Upanishad. Very concentrated is the teaching. The verses are only nine, but so much has been said in these nine verses that we may say that these nine verses themselves are a kind of Upanishad. You can commit the whole thing to memory and meditate on the implication, the suggestive meanings of these verses, and it will form a complete meditation for you.

SECTION 2

Now we go to the second section.

Tad etat satyam: mantreṣu karmāṇi kavayo yāny apaśyams tāni tretāyāṁ bahudhā santatāni, tāny ācaratha niyatam, satyakāmā, eṣa vaḥ panthāḥ sukṛtasya loke (1.2.1.). This is a different subject altogether. The first mantra, the beginning verses, told us that there are two types of knowledge, the lower and the higher. Rg-vedo yajur-vedaḥ sāma-vedo'tharva-vedaḥ śikṣā kalpo vyākaraṇaṁ (1.1.5), etc., are all lower knowledge. Higher knowledge is that great spiritual insight by which we come into direct contact with the Imperishable. This was told to us in the earlier verses.

Now some details are given as to what this lower knowledge is. The mantras of the Veda are utilised in the performance of sacrifices, or *yagnas*. This is the secondary character of the Veda mantras. Veda mantras can be used as prayers to the Almighty God or the divinities inhabiting heaven. That is one form of the utilisation of the mantras. But the major aspect of the mantras is their utility in the performance of *yagnas*. This is true: tad etat satyam. Whatever suggestion for the performance of action as sacrifice or *yagna* was visualised by the great sages in the mantras of the Veda, that vision has to be considered as true. That is to say, the Vedic sacrifices are not just concoctions of the mind or someone's whim and fancy. There is a truth in it.

The rituals that we perform in our religious worships are not unnecessary things as some modern intellectuals may sometimes tell us. The entire body and mind gesticulates. It is not merely the body; even the mind puts on a gesture, an attitude when a ritual is performed. This point is missed by critics. When the mind and body are in a state of unison in the performance of a ritual, the prayer assumes a physical shape. The mantras are prayers. The Vedic mantras are hymns offered to God, and the implementation or actual practice of this prayer is the ritual thereof. The ritual can be worship as we do in temples, for instance, or it can be an act of a *homa* or *yagna* or sacrifice. These suggestions of actual action proceeding from the mantras in the form of ritual are true. It is not untrue, says the mantra: tad etat satyam.

Mantreṣu karmāṇi kavayo yāny apaśyams tāni tretāyāṁ bahudhā santatāni. *Treta* means three Vedas. In the three Vedas – Rigveda, Yajurveda, Samaveda – we will find every mantra is a potential for action. The Mimamsa Shastra is very vigorous in the affirmation of mantras being just instruments in the performance of external sacrifice. Knowledge is the medium for action. After we know something, we do something. We do not merely know something and keep quiet. So *shodhana*, or incentive for action, is the potential of every mantra. This is the Mimamsa Shastra, and we are mentioning it in this particular verse. Therefore, the three

Vedas are incentives for the performance of further action in the form of ritual and *yagna*. *Treta* means three Vedas, and it also means Treta Yuga. There are four Yugas: Krita Yuga, Treta Yuga, Dvapara Yuga and Kali Yuga. We are in Kali Yuga, the last of the Yugas. Eka eva purā vedaḥ praṇavaḥ sarva-vāṅgmāyaḥ (Srimad Bhagavata 9.14.48). In Krita Yuga there was no Veda, no *yagna* or sacrifice, no worship, no government as such, no ruler, no necessity for law and order, etc. It is called the *hamsa* condition – pure Eternity living on earth, the golden age, the millennium come, as some religions tell us. Treta Yuga was a descent in the moral order of creation; and then the *yagnas* started, and also the Vedas. Otherwise, Om – Pranava – alone was the Veda. The three Vedas were not there. Hence, we can take this word '*treta*' to mean both things: either the commencement of *yagnas* in the Treta Yuga, or it may mean the three Vedas being the incentive for the performance of *yagnas*.

Tāny ācaratha: Please do it. The Mimamsa tells us, "Please do this." Niyatam: Regularly perform these *yagnas*. Satyakāmāḥ: If you want the fruit of your good deeds in the form of heavenly experiences, if you want Indra's glory and to rejoice in heaven, here it is. Come, perform *yagnas* by the recitation of the mantras of the three Vedas. Eṣa vaḥ panthāḥ sukṛtasya loke: This is the blessedness for you. Mimamsa speaks here to you, "It is the path of blessedness open to you. All people come. If you recite the Veda mantras properly, perform *yagna* and offer oblations to the gods, the flames of the sacrifice uniting themselves with the rays of the Sun will take you, by your subtle body, to the glorious realm of Indra's heaven." So here is an invitation to the heaven of Indra.

Yathā lelāyate hy arcis samiddhe havya-vāhane, tad ājya-bhāvāv antareṇāhutiḥ pratipādayec chraddhayā-hutam (1.2.2). When we perform a *havanam*, *yagnam*, the flames should shoot forth. The fire should not be smouldering, and it should not be smoking. If that is the case, then the *yagna* is not done properly. *Savita* is the flaming forth of the heated fire. When the flames move like tongues of fire, lapping hither and thither with a roaring sound, into those tongues of fire

coming up from the vigorous burning of the *yagna agni* we must offer the holy *ghee*, the clarified butter, between the flames. The offerings are to be poured between the lapping flames. Pratipādayec: This is an instruction as to how we have to conduct *yagna*.

Yasyāgnihotram adarśam apaurṇamāsam acāturmāsyam anāgrayaṇam atithivarjitam ca, ahutam avaiśvadevam avidhinā hutam ā-saptamāṁs tasya lokān hinasti (1.2.3). Here we have a tremendous instruction from the Mimamsa Shastra – Karmakanda gone to its extreme, we may say. It is not enough if we just perform one *havan* and keep quiet, as in *agnihotra*, for instance. The mantra here says if a person does not at the same time, together with the performance of *agnihotra*, also perform the special sacrifices called *darsha* and *paurnamasa* during the new moon and the full moon, does not also perform the special offerings required to be done during the four months of the rainy season, does not also perform the special *havan* intended to be done during the spring season, and if the *havan* is performed without guests being fed during the *yagna*, and if the flames do not come forth properly and are only smouldering and smoking, and if the feeding of animals, etc, is also not taken care of at the same time, and if the mantras in the *yagna* are not properly chanted with the proper intonation and recitation, what will happen? Seven generations of ours will be destroyed: ā-saptamāṁs tasya lokān hinasti. It is a very terrible curse. It also means that for us, the seven worlds will be destroyed. Bhuloka, Bhuvarloka, Svarloka, Mahaloka, Janaloka, Tapaloka, Satyaloka will expel us and not allow us to enter. Therefore, imagine how difficult it is to perform a sacrifice, a *yagna*. If we make a little mistake – a little wrong intonation, a little fumbling – the result is great danger. Karmakanda is very difficult. If we do it, wonderful; but if we do not do it properly, to hell we go.

Kālī karalī ca mano-javā ca sulhoitā yā ca sudhūmravarṇā, sphuliṅginī viśva-rūpi ca devī lelāyamānā iti sapta-jiḥvāḥ (1.2.4). In a properly performed sacrifice, seven flames of the fire are supposed to shoot up, not just one or two. The hungry fire

will lap up in seven tongues, and the seven tongues have their own names – kālī: the black one; karalī: the blacker one; mano-javā: rapid like the movement of the mind; sulhoitā: reddish in colour; sudhūmravarṇā: brownish in colour; sphuliṅginī: sparking forth; viśva-rūpi: radiant; devī: divine are the flames. Agni himself rises up to receive our offering and take us to the gods so that, in their satisfaction, they lift us up to the abode of the gods. Lelāyamānā iti sapta-jiḥvāḥ: Oscillating flames of the *agni* to which we offer the oblations are designated in this manner. These names are to be remembered. Kālī karalī ca mano-javā ca sulhoitā yā ca sudhūmravarṇā, sphuliṅginī viśva-rūpi ca devī lelāyamānā iti sapta-jiḥvāḥ.

Eteṣu yaś carate bhrājamāneṣu yathā-kālaṁ cā hutayo hy ādadāyan, taṁ nayanty etās sūryasya raśmayo yatra devānām patir eko'dhivāsaḥ (1.2.5). If we are in a position to perform these sacrifices meticulously without committing mistakes, as we calculate a mathematical problem right from the beginning to the end without making any error, if we can perform the *yagnas* as mentioned in these verses in the holy fire which is radiating with its power, if offerings are made in this way, then what happens? The fire assumes a very subtle form as soundless ethereal shapes, into which it enters when it becomes inaudible; and colour also becomes invisible and merges into the subtle rays of the Sun. The flames of the fire transmute themselves into fine forces of light converging into the intensity of the rays of the Sun.

Taṁ nayanty etās sūryasya raśmayo yatra devānām patir eko'dhivāsaḥ. The soul, the subtle body of the performer of the *yagna*, is drawn out when the body is shed, and by the gravitational pull of the rays of the Sun and the propulsion given by the flames of fire into which we have offered the yagna, the soul of the *jiva* that departs from the body rises up. Where do we go? We go to the Sun, the solar orb. From there we are transported. Yatra devānām patir eko'dhivāsaḥ: We are very graciously, lovingly escorted to the great heaven of Indra who rules the whole heaven. So be prepared for the

great blessedness of going to heaven, and do *yagnas* every day.

Parīkṣya lokān karmancitān brāhmaṇo nirvedam āyān nāsty akṛtah kṛtena, tad vijñānārthaṁ sa gurum evābhigacchet samit-pāṇiḥ śrotriyam brahma-niṣṭham (1.2.12). Having given us an idea of the prospects of the performer of *yagnas* or sacrifices, and having told us that karmas, actions, sacrifices are unreliable boats in one's effort to cross the ocean of life, and hinting that only those who are austere and live in seclusion, living a simple life, having a lofty goal before them as their final destination, reach Brahmaloka, the abode of blessedness, through the rays of the Sun, now the Upanishad tells us that the way to Brahman, the path of spirituality, the *sadhana marga*, is through a Guru or a spiritual preceptor.

Having seen this world properly, having investigated the futility of expressing permanent happiness through works which are perishable in nature because every work has a beginning and an end – that which has an origin will also have secession one day or the other – therefore, works which are of an impermanent nature essentially will not be adequate means to carry the soul to that which is absolutely permanent. Parīkṣya lokān: Properly investigating into the transient character of all things in the world which are attained by the performance of *yagnas*, sacrifices, etc, a Brahmana, a learned one, should become fed up with this world. Having enjoyed everything in this world, we will finally not like to have anything from this world. The end of this world enjoyment is retirement from any kind of contact with it. Satiety of desires is unknown. The more we pamper our longings, the more do they become vigorous and the more they will go on asking endlessly, which the world cannot grant.

One should finally feel satiated with all things that the world can give. As when we have had a full meal and cannot eat anything further, so should be the satiety we feel in this world. Renunciation of the world is possible only by such a person who has seen the world thoroughly, through and through, who has not left any part of the world

uninvestigated, and has everything that this world can give. Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj used to say that only those who were kings in the previous birth can become *sannyasins*. If you are really dispassionate, a true *sannyasin* wanting nothing in this world, you must have been an emperor in the previous birth, because one who has not tasted the world cannot reject the world. Hence, everything has to be seen properly, and going deep into the structure of the possibilities of pleasures that the world can give – or whatever the world can give, pleasures or otherwise – one should finally detach oneself from all things that the world appears to promise. Why?

Nāsty akṛtah kṛtena: That which is not the product of any kind of action cannot be reached by actions, which are products. Actions are emanations of personality, and are not self-existent. Actions cannot hang in the air. They have to emanate, rise from some personality. Therefore, they are in the form of an effect. An effect is that which is produced by a cause; it is a product. That which is a product cannot become the cause of the attainment of that which is not a product. The Purusha, the Supreme, is not created by anybody. It is a non-created eternal. Temporal things cannot take us to the eternal. Time has no connection with eternity. The three-dimensional world is a shadow, as it were, cast by an eternity which is supposed to be multi-dimensional or infinite-dimensional. Let a person get disgusted with this world and want nothing from it, realising that this world cannot actually fulfil its promises. Its promises are empty. Knowing the futility of life in this world, one should humbly approach a great master for the sake of the knowledge of that which shall make the soul immortal one day or the other.

What kind of teacher, what kind of a master? One who has two qualities. Śrotriyam brahma-niṣṭham: He must be immensely learned, and also spiritually established. If a person is spiritually established but does not feel competent to expound the scriptures, he will not be able to speak to you. But if a person is learned but not established in Brahman, then his speeches will be empty. So the two qualifications are

mentioned here: internally established in God, Brahman consciousness, and outwardly capable of expounding the meaning of the scriptures in a highly learned manner that carries conviction in the mind of a student.

Humbly you should approach. Samit-pāṇiḥ is the word used here. In ancient days, disciples used to live with the Gurus in forests, in retreats, etc., far from cities and available means of transport and the minimum needs of life, so that even firewood was a difficult thing for them to obtain. So firewood was carried by disciples, especially for the *yagnas* or sacrifices. Every householder has to perform an *agnihotra* sacrifice. Most of the great masters those days were householders, and so they had to carry on the *agnihotra* sacrifices every day, for which firewood is necessary. So the first thing that the disciple would offer to the Guru was firewood, and every day he would go to the forest to collect it, which, in those days, was a very important duty of disciples. It is in this context that it is mentioned to approach the Guru humbly, with holy firewood in one's hand, or it may simply be an offering that is the need of the Guru. In those days firewood was a necessity, but in other cases it may be something else. So, whatever is a requirement of the Guru is that which has to be offered by a disciple. With such offering, humbly let a seeker of Brahman approach that master who is learned in sacred lore and established in Brahman - śrotriyam brahma-niṣṭham.

Tasmai sa vidvān upasannāya samyak praśānta-cittāya śamānvitāya, yenākṣaram puruṣaṁ veda satyam provāca tāṁ tattvato brahma-vidyam. To such a sincere disciple who humbly approaches the master with restrained mind, with no desires whatsoever, and with *sama*, *dama* and such qualities – *sama* is internal restraint, the restraint of the inner organs, and *dama* is external restraint, the restraint of the outer organs – and who is calm and quiet, composed in mind, when such a person approaches the Guru for the sake of that Imperishable Purusha who is to be known, the Truth of all truths, the Guru speaks. What does he speak? He speaks the essentials of Brahma-vidhya – tattvato brahma-vidyam.

Now we are given some indication as to what this Brahma-vidhya is. Up to this, it is some kind of introduction. We have been introduced into the essence of the Upanishad in all these passages that we have gone through up to this time. Now comes the real import of the Upanishad, which is supposed to be the teaching of the Guru to the sincere disciple.

Chapter 2

SECTION 1

This is Chapter 2, Section 1

Tad etat satyam: yathā sudīptāt pāvakād visphuliṅgāḥ sahasraśaḥ prabhavante sarūpāḥ, tathākṣarād vividhāḥ, saumya, bhāvāḥ prajāyante tatra caivāpi yanti (2.1.1): O Master, how has this world come? The disciple raises the question.

There are various ways of answering this question of how this world has come. In the beginning the answer will depend on the ability of the student's mind to understand, because the student imagines that the world has come from something. The student has not seen this world coming from something. Even without seeing the world coming from something, we put questions such as "Who created this world?" and "Why should the world be created by anybody?" We imagine that this world must have been created by someone, and as this assumption is already in the mind, one has to take the stand of the disciple in assuming that there is a cause for this world; so initially, by a kind of illustration and analogy, the cause of the world and the manner of its coming from the cause is described in this verse.

Here is the truth, the answer to your question. As from a large conflagration of fire thousands of sparks emanate in all directions, in a similar manner, varieties of individualities – species of beings and things – emerge from this imperishable Reality and return to it, as sparks of fire that rise from the conflagration shoot up and then go back to their source, which is the fire itself. Thus is the world coming from its cause, which is the imperishable Brahman. It comes, it is sustained, and it returns. There is a beginning and middle and an end for this world. Therefore the world is not real, merely because of this simple fact that it has a beginning and an end and a tentative middle.

The illustration of the fire and sparks is to indicate for the student's comprehension that there is some quality in us

which will enable us to reach God. If the effect is totally disconnected from the cause – if there is nothing in the effect which can be called similar to the essence of the cause – there will be no relationship between them. This is to indicate that in spite of our separation from God, our fall from Brahman, as it were, we are still endowed with that potential for returning to Brahman because the seat of Brahman is planted in our own heart. The Atman that we are is an indication of the Universal that Brahman is, just as the character of the spark is in essence the same as the character of fire. This illustration makes out that basically we are verily that which we are seeking. If we are entirely dissociated from that, there will be no possibility of our returning to it. The Atman is Brahman basically.

Divyo hy amūrtaḥ puruṣah sa bāhyābhyantaro hy ajaḥ aprāṇo hy amanāḥ śubhro akṣarāt paratah paraḥ (2.1.2). It was said that from that Imperishable Being, everything proceeds; the world is created by That. That Supreme Imperishable is the divine, formless Purusha. Here Purusha is to be understood in the sense of essential Consciousness. The origin of all things is Consciousness. It presupposes all thoughts, all actions and all types of awareness of objects. Even to think, there must be consciousness behind the thought. Even when we assert or deny a thing, consciousness is behind the act of affirmation and denial. If we totally doubt and become a confirmed agnostic or atheist, even in that act of our agnosticism or atheism there is a consciousness of our being such a thing. Even if we say nothing exists, there is a consciousness that affirms that nothing exists; therefore, something exists. That something is the consciousness of even the denial of all things. Such is the Purusha, which is the Supreme Consciousness.

Sa bāhyābhyantaro hy ajaḥ: Inside and outside, it is there. Consciousness cannot be divided into parts. It has no fractions. There is no division in consciousness. It is indivisible. Because of the fact that it is indivisible, it is all-pervading. If it is only in one place, it can be divided. If it is in one place, there should be a place where it is not. Now, to

know that consciousness is not in some place, consciousness has to be there already, because the absence of consciousness cannot be known except by consciousness itself, and so even the location of the absence of consciousness is consciousness itself. We cannot negate it in any manner whatsoever. The denial of consciousness is an act of consciousness only, and therefore it is to be considered as pervading all things, and not located somewhere. It is not only in one place, it is everywhere.

Ajaḥ: It is unborn; it has no beginning. To conceive the beginning of consciousness is impossible, because there must be somebody to conceive that consciousness as the beginning. If we imagine that consciousness was created at some time, we must imagine that there was something prior to consciousness which created consciousness. Then there will be what is called infinite regression of argument: "Who created that which caused the coming of consciousness?" Then we can ask another question: "Who caused that second one?" etc. Finally, we will find that we will land on the lap of consciousness. It cannot be created by anybody, because the very question of the creation of consciousness is raised by consciousness itself. Hence, finally we have to accept that consciousness is Ultimate Reality; it is unborn in its nature.

Aprānaḥ: It is not an individual *prana* consciousness – breathing, etc. It has no mind, because there is no necessity for it to think anything. As there are no objects in front of it, why should there be a mind? And as it is not an individual with a body, there is also no *prana*. Śubhraḥ: Pure, simple radiance. Akṣarāt paratah paraḥ: Even the so-called imperishable *prakriti* is perishable in the light of a still higher imperishability that is beyond *prakriti* – paratah paraḥ.

Etasmāj jāyate prāṇo manaḥ sarvendriyāṇi ca, khaṁ vāyur jyotir āpaḥ pṛthivī viśvasya dhāriṇī (2.1.3): From this great Purusha, everything comes. The cosmic *prana*, Hiranyagarbha, emanates from this Supreme Brahman. The Virat, which is called here the *manas*, also emanates from that Brahman. All the *indriyas*, or the sense organs, also

emanate from That. They are actually the feeders, the tentacles of consciousness. Khaṁ vāyur jyotir āpaḥ pṛthivī viśvasya dhāriṇī: The five elements – earth, water, fire, air and ether – the very Earth that sustains us, the basis of all, emanate from That. The whole Brahmanda, the fourteen worlds, seven above and seven below, which are the permutations and combinations, modifications of gross forms or subtle forms, or the real forms of the five elements, all these come from one breath, as it were, of this one Supreme Being.

Aginr mūrdhā cakṣuṣī candra-sūryau, diśaḥ śrotre, vāg vivṛtāś ca vedāḥ, vāyuḥ prāṇo hṛdayaṁ viśvam, asaya padbhyām pṛthivī hy eṣa sarva-bhūtāntarātmā (2.1.4): This Cosmic Being is described here as something like the Vishvarupa Darshana of the eleventh chapter of the Bhagavagita. Aginr mūrdhā: Agni here represents Heaven. The radiant heavens are the head of the Supreme Being. Cakṣuṣī candra-sūryau: The Sun and the Moon are the eyes of that Supreme Being. Diśaḥ śrotre: The entire quarters of space are the ears, as it were, of that being. Vāg vivṛtāś ca vedāḥ: Vedas are its words, or the speech it utters. Vāyuḥ prāṇaḥ: The entire cosmic breath, the entire air, the wind, is the universal Prana. Hṛdayaṁ viśvam, asaya: The whole Universe is its heart. Padbhyām pṛthivī: The gross form of physical manifestation in the form of this Earth may be regarded as its footstool. Eṣa sarva-bhūtāntarātmā: This is a picture before you of the all-pervading Soul of all beings.

This illustration is to point out that all things that we can conceive in our mind or see with our eyes are part of this great being, the limbs of the Virat Purusha. That something is the eye, something is the head, something is the foot is only illustrative of everything being somehow or other organically connected with this Being. The whole universe is its body: eṣa sarva-bhūtāntarātmā.

Tasmād agnis samidho yasa sūryaḥ somāt parjanya oṣadhayaḥ pṛthivyām, putmān retas siñcati yoṣitāyām bahvīḥ prajāḥ puruṣāt samprasūtāḥ (2.1.5). The creation process is

described here in terms of the Panchagni Vidhya, which is described in more detail in the Chhandogya Upanishad. This is a very interesting concept that we have in the Upanishads – the Panchagni Vidhya, the fivefold descent through which any event in the world can be imagined to take place. Events do not take place merely on Earth. They take place in heaven first. A vibration takes place in the highest heaven, and here this heavenly vibration is called Agni, or the Supreme Fire of the original cosmic activity.

The Sun may be regarded as a representative of heaven. The heat and light of the Sun are responsible for everything that happens between the Sun and all the planets, including Earth. Any event that takes place in the world is caused by the Sun. You must have heard that sunspots sometimes occur and create catastrophes in the world, and their positions suddenly cause a rise or fall in the cost of materials. It depends upon the manner in which the sunspot affects the Earth.

There are also indications of the Moon acting in the same way. If we observe the Moon two or three days after the New Moon, *amavasya*, we will find a crescent visible on the horizon. This crescent is sometimes slanting, and not straight like a cup. Either it is slanting to the left side or it is slanting to the right side, but very rarely is it straight. The belief is, astronomically, that if it is slanting to the left, prices of commodities will fall in the direction where it is slanting, and where it is rising up – north or south, as the case may be – the price of commodities will rise.

Can we imagine this mystery, how the Sun and the Moon can control us? Someone has written a beautiful book called 'Super Nature'. Moonlight does not penetrate deep into the waters of the ocean, but there are little molluscs living deep in the ocean that arrange their activities according to the movement of the moonlight, though the moonlight does not reach them. They must be great mystical astronomers indeed! And so is the wonder of the effect that is produced by the Sun and the Moon, and even by the interstellar cosmic

rays that impinge upon the Earth and affect us in multifarious ways.

This heavenly vibration, therefore, is the cause of everything that is taking place here. And the vibrations created by the solar orb produce such an impact upon the atmosphere that the heat of the Sun sucks the waters of the ocean and converts it into vapour which forms clouds; by the action of wind blowing in various directions according to the circumstances of nature, rain falls.

Somāt parjanya: Rain falls. Oṣadhayaḥ pṛthivyām: When rain falls, plants grow. There is harvest in the fields, and vegetables and all edibles in the world become available to us. But how does rain fall? A great activity is taking place in the mid-heavens, over which we have no control. We cannot create rain, and we will all perish if there is no rain. These vegetables and foodstuffs are eaten by man and finally converted into the bloodstream, and then into the essences which are responsible for the production of children while living a married life.

Putmān retas siñcati yoṣitāyām bahvīḥ prajāḥ puruṣāt samprasūtāḥ: In this manner, the heavenly Purusha is causing, by its own vibration of will, the creation of every little thing in this world. Even the little crawling insects are created by the Supreme Purusha. Creation takes place in a variety of ways, which is only one illustration of the manner of the relation of cause and effect, highlighting how we, in our crude form of understanding, imagine how something could have come from something else. Why should anything come from something else? Because if something is not there which is causeless, and if the ultimate cause also has a cause, there would be a logical regression and the argument will break. A meaningful argument should have an end. Endless arguments are no arguments. And so, the argument in respect of the effect coming from a cause should lead to a cause which itself has no further cause.

This causeless cause must also be an intelligent cause. Therefore, this ultimate cause is, firstly, without any cause

behind it – there is no other cause for it; secondly, it is intelligent because it is purposive and knows what to create; and thirdly, it is all-pervading because if it is located in one place only, it will be a perishable object. Thus, the Supreme Purusha is indivisible consciousness, all-pervading, causative of everything in this world. This is one answer of the Guru in reply to the disciple's question how things have come at all. Generally, when disciples go to Gurus, this is the first question they put. Why was this world created, and who created it? They have many other questions, no doubt, but the first question that generally arises in the mind of a student is how this world has come. And here is a tentative answer according to the understanding of the disciple for the time being.

These passages of the Mundaka Upanishad that we are presently studying deal with the creative process of the Universe. In the previous session we had some inkling of it – the cause producing the effect and continuously having influence over the effect until the very end. The passage or the verse concerning the Panchagni Vidhya, which we discussed earlier, is an astounding doctrine of not only there being causes behind causes, an endless series of connections and concatenations, but also one thing influencing the other. The Upanishad is a knowledge that cuts off all attachments. It is the secret wisdom that severs the tree of bondage. One of the ways it adopts is to instil into the students' minds the nature of the world, so that when it is properly understood or investigated into, it will no more be a source of attraction and repulsion, love and hatred.

The occurrences in the world, the events taking place in space and time, the very historical process of mankind – all these are certain occurrences taking place in the world that are above this Earth, just as the manifestation of our own physical body is not a sudden occurrence or an abrupt manifestation from nowhere but a gradual concretisation of impulsions and intentions coming from within. For instance, in order that the physical body may shape itself into this particular form that we see, it has first of all to be vitalised by

the *prana* which is within. The within-ness of the *prana* is the reason why there appears to be life and vitality in the physical body. In a similar way, activities in this world, all the processes of human history, have a cause behind the physical realm. There is a super-physical cause for all that happens in the physical world.

The way in which the *prana* operates in the body determines its condition of health. The *prana* decides whether we are healthy or sick. It is very important to know that life and *prana* are identical. If *prana* is harmoniously distributed in the body, there is a pacified state of mind also, at the same time, and there is lightness of body, buoyancy of spirit and quickness in the ability to grasp things mentally. Therefore, internal to the body there is a *prana* that causes the so-called activities of the body. If the hands and the feet move, it is because the *prana* moves inside. The *prana* exerts pressure on a limb in a particular direction, and then it starts moving. But inside the *prana* there is the thought which causes the *prana* to operate in that particular manner. When we walk, the *prana* will not impel the legs to move unless there is thought behind it. The mind wants the *prana* to work in such a way that it moves the legs. But within the mind there is reason, which says that it is necessary to move the legs. The mind is only a connecting link between the reason on one side and the *prana* on the other side. But there is something behind reason – namely, the very fact of our being individuals in this world. Why should there be a necessity to move the limbs? It arises on account of a certain kind of finitude in which we are involved. The *jivatatva* is the cause; and *jiva* is nothing but a concentrated point of the Atman consciousness. Thus, the *tapas* of Brahman created the world, says the Upanishad in one of its passages: tapasā cīyate brahma, tato'nnam abhijāyate (1.1.8).

Anna is the product of this concentration of the will of Brahman. All that is produced can be regarded as *anna*, and in this sense the finitude itself is a product. It is *anna* for the concentrated will of the Atman to manifest itself as an individual. And the finitude causes another product which is

its *anna* – namely, the reason or the intellect. The mind is the *anna* or the product of the reason. The *prana* is the *anna* or the product of the mind, and the physical body is the *anna* or the product of the *prana*. As it happens in this manner in an individual case, so is it that everything happens in the world. The Panchagni Vidhya of the Upanishad is a cosmological iteration of the very same process that takes place in our own individuality, through which it is that we are what we are in this body.

The causes behind the causes is the story of creation, especially the Panchagni Vidhya Tattva. There is a cause for the body, which is the *prana*. There is a cause for the *prana*, which is the mind. There is a cause for the mind, which is the reason. There is a cause for the reason, which is the *jivatatva* or finitude, and there is a cause for that, which is the will of the Atman. So is this production of things and events in this world which are occasioned by certain vibrations. The vibrations are one behind the other. In the beginning, originally there is the *tattva* or the *tapas* concentration of Brahman Himself, which gyrates and produces Hiranyagarbha-tattva, Virat-tattva, space-time. After that there are the *tanmatras* – *shabdha, sparsa, rupa, rasa, gandha* – then the five elements, and all things down to the very earth from where there is the harvest of diet, and food which when eaten produces vitality in the system, causing further enlargement of the species.

Tasmād ṛcaḥ sāma yajūṁṣi dīkṣā yajñaś ca sarve kratavo dakṣiṇāś ca, saṁvatsaraś ca yajamānaś ca lokāḥ somo yatra pavate yara sūryaḥ (2.1.6): From this Being, everything proceeds, it is said. The Vedic verses, mantras, are also emanations of this Being, which means the truths contained in the Veda mantras are eternally there as projections of certain aspects in the manifestation of Brahma-tattva. The chants, the Yajurveda mantras and the formulae that are employed in the performance of sacrifices, the rites connected with these *yagnas*, ceremonies of various types, the gifts and what not, even the time chosen for the sacrifice, and the worlds purified by the Sun and the Moon which the

soul will attain after the departure from this body, all these are conditioned by that original *tapas* of Brahman. Our future is in the hands of God. This is what is actually meant by this passage – our past, our present, as well as our future. The condition into which we are born into this world, the community in which we find ourselves, the length of life for which we will be living in this world, the experiences which we will pass through are all written down while we are still in our mother's womb.

Jāti āyuḥ bhogāḥ (Yoga Sutras 2.13): *Jati, ayuh, bhoga* are already predetermined even before we come out of the womb of our mother. We cannot change one inch of it. This is a *sutra* of Patanjali. *Jati* is the category of life into which it will be born – the community, so-called. *Ayuh* is the length of life. *Bhoga* is the joy or the sorrow that we have to reap in this world. In a similar manner are all these things mentioned here – the total concept of events taking place in all the worlds.

Not only the visible, tangible objects of sense, but also the processes of perception and the motive force that causes this perceptional process are also to be regarded as conditioned by this original *tapas* of Brahman. And there is then nothing left for the *jiva* to contemplate individually. The individual remains merely as an instrument of action in the hands of that great *tapas* of Brahman. Here creation is considered in a total sense and not merely in a linear descending series, and is taking place from all sides like winds sometimes blow from all sides and not only in one direction. It is not a single direction that the Will of Brahman has taken in the production of effects from causes, but everywhere there is a spread-out series of causes, infinite in number, producing infinite products or effects from this countless process everywhere, just as we have countless cells in the body that not only move in one direction – they do not move just in a linear, vertical, horizontal or whatever direction – there is a rounding-up of activity through the harmonious action of the cells from all directions. Creation, therefore, is a multidirectional activity. It is not a single direction that is

taken as we walk on the road, for instance. We walk only in one direction, but the Will of Brahman does not act in that manner. It acts from all directions, and it is as infinite as Brahman itself is. This is why it is said that the creation of Brahman also is infinite. Infinite produces infinite, limitlessness comes from Limitlessness, and Eternity produces eternity, as it were, in a most remarkable sense.

Tasmāc ca devā bhaudhā samprasūtāḥ sādhyā manuṣyāḥ paśavo vayāṁsi, prāṇāpānau vrīhi-yavau tapaś ca śraddhā satyam brahma-caryaṁ vidhiś ca (2.1.7): These passages connected with the creation of the universe occurring in the Mundaka Upanishad have some relevance or connection with the Purusha Sukta of the Veda, which also says that all gods, all sacrifices that are performed by the gods and for the gods, and every animal conceivable, every little thing, birds, insects, even the grains in the fields, the very breathing process, and activities such as religious and philosophical considerations, faith and truth, self-restraint, law and order, all these are the will of Brahman. The author of the Upanishad has, as much as possible, tried to conceive. There is nothing left unsaid by these verses, which are very few in number but plentiful in their abundance of meaning. From Him, from that great plenum of felicity, these seven senses manifest themselves.

The seven senses are: sapta-prāṇāḥ prabhavanti tasmāt saptārciṣas samidhas sapta-homāḥ, sapta ime lokā yeṣu caranti prāṇā guhāśayā nihitās sapta sapta. (2.1.8). Seven orifices above the neck are referred to here as seven senses – the two nostrils, the two eyes, the two ears, and a mouth. These are the seven apertures which act like senses, performing their respective functions. These senses and their powers of cognition – not only the location of the eyes, nose, ears, etc, but also the capacity involved in them to perform their function and the particular objects to which they are directed, as also the knowledge that such objects are the requisites for the function of a specific sense organ, and the physical locations of these senses – are what is meant by these cryptic words *prana*, *arcisas*, *samidhas* and *homa*.

Sacrificial terminology is used here to describe an otherwise vital function that is taking place in us.

Seven *pranas* are the seven functions of the sense organs mentioned, and the flaming anguish of these senses to grab that particular food or object are known as saptārciṣas, seven flames. Our desires are like flames. They rush forth like burning heat in the direction of their objects. And the objects themselves are called *samit*, which is offered into the sacrifice. The sacrifice – the word *homa* used here – is the consumption of the object. There is a kind of Prana Agnihotra, otherwise described in the Chhandogya Upanishad. As we have an external sacrifice which we perform on alters in a physical fire and oblations such as *ghee*, etc., are poured over them, we have an internal sacrifice taking place; that is called Agnihotra inside the body. Only householders perform external sacrifice. Vanaprasthas who are retired from household life perform the very same sacrifice inwardly – that is, internal Prana Agnihotra. When we take our meals, we are actually offering an oblation into the fire of Vaishvanara which operates in the stomach as the *samana prana*. It is the duty of any educated person in the field of spirituality not to eat food with greed like an animal but to pay some attention to the process that is taking place in the very act of taking food. We just do not lap up, or grab like an animal, the diet that is offered. A prayer is involved in the very process of eating.

Life is a prayer. The sense organs, in their greed for their objects, are actually craving for relief from the agony or the involvement in this grizzly action of their longings for things. There is a deity operating inside the ear as a point of consciousness at the back of the nervous system and the eardrum, etc., that appear to be the causes of the sounds that we hear. So is the case with all other sense organs. If we ignore the presence of these conscious points called divinities, we would be paying disrespect to them, and the Agnihotra sacrifice would not then be performed. Those who eat without offering to the gods first as a sacrament are actually thieves, says the Bhagavadgita.

In the Panchagni Vidya we have been told in a very, very dramatic fashion, picturesquely, that the diet that we take is actually something produced by the earth, which happens on account of the rainfall coming from the skies. And the rain is nothing but an effect produced by certain vibrations of the rays of the Sun in respect of the water element in the world. And even there, the final cause is not reached. Why should the Sun act in this manner? Who has empowered the Sun to project heating rays so that the water vapour may be absorbed, become clouds, and move about by the action of wind that simultaneously cooperates in this process? Why should all this take place? Let the Sun convert water into vapour, but why should the wind also blow simultaneously? Who is the reason, who is the cause behind this cooperative activity? There is also something beyond the Sun. That is the heavenly spirit, willing that things should take place in that particular fashion. So this kind of Panchagni Vidhya is taking place inside the body as well as outside the body. All occurrences in world history, inwardly as well as outwardly, inside us as well as outside us, are manifested by a series of causes and effects of the central will, the concentration, the *tapas* of Brahman: tapasā cīyate brahma (1.1.8).

Sapta ime lokā yeṣu caranti prāṇā guhāśayā nihitās sapta sapta (2.1.8): Seven are the worlds which will be reached by the performer of this kind of internal Agnihotra, Panchagni Vidhya Tattva. And any one of these worlds will be our fruit thereof. We know what the seven worlds are, and we may reborn there in any way, in any fashion, according to the devotion with which the sacrifice has been performed. Both outer sacrifice as well as inner sacrifice have a common intention of lifting the soul above this physical body and taking it into the heavenly regions, even up to the highest Brahmaloka.

Atas samudrā girayaś ca sarve asmāt syandante sindhavas sarva-rūpāḥ, ataś ca sarvā oṣadhayo rasaś ca yenaiṣa bhūtais tiṣṭhate hy antar-ātmā (2.1.9). Atas samudrā: Even the oceans are created by Him. Don't you think it is a picturesque description? Girayaś ca sarve: The mountains, oceans and

rivers cannot be there but for the will of That – asmāt syandante sindhavas sarva-rūpāḥ. The author of this Upanishad must have been a great poet like Kalidasa, who beautifully presents before us all the values of Kali as emanating from one single point.

Atas samudrā girayaś ca sarve asmāt syandante sindhavas sarva-rūpāḥ, ataś ca sarvā oṣadhayo rasaś ca yenaiṣa bhūtais tiṣṭhate hy antar-ātmā: This inner Atman appearing as Brahman outside and the Kutastha Tattva inside us is the cause of even the mighty oceans and towering Himalaya Mountains. The rivers flow in a particular direction only, and not in another direction. The sun rises only in one direction, and not elsewhere. The stars scintillate and maintain their positions not in any other manner, only because of terror of the operation of the system of law and order of Brahman *tapas*. All the trees and plants grow only because of the will of that *tapas*. There cannot be a breeze moving, wafting through the leaves of trees in the thick of the forest unless that *tapas* operates. Do you believe that such a thing is possible, that even an atom cannot vibrate and act in the manner it does unless the central will is there operating at the nucleus of that atom?

Yenaiṣa bhūtais tiṣṭhate hy antar-ātmā: Through all these manifestations mentioned in various ways, this inner Atman rejoices and glories in itself. It plays in the form of the Universe. That is lokavattu lilakaivalyam (2.1.33), says the Brahma Sutra. Why does the supreme Brahman manifest itself? Why does it do *tapas* and concentrate and become all these things in this way? Lokavattu lilakaivalyam. Why do children play? Why do they create mud houses and then in the evening kick them apart and return home? Why to they skip and dance? There is no reason for that. So is the reasonless sport for Brahman in the form of this picturesque manifestation.

Puruṣa evedaṁ viśvaṁ karma tapo brahma parāmṛtam, etad yo veda nihitaṁ guhāyāṁ so'vidyā-granthiṁ vikiratīha, saumya (2.1.10): The whole cosmos is this Purusha only. We

are seeing nothing but that in front of us. Karma tapo brahma parāmṛtam: Our actions, our austerities, our studies, and the fruits of our actions all are included in this vast manifestation – puruṣa evedaṁ sarvam (Purusha Sukta 2). It is the Purusha Sukta speaking through the Upanishad, as it were.

Etad yo veda nihitaṁ guhāyāṁ so'vidyā-granthiṁ vikiratīha, saumya: The Guru speaks, "My dear disciple, listen! Whoever knows this secret that I have been telling you all the while, in connection with the Atman which is the deepest reality of every individual and the deepest reality of the cosmos, whoever knows this correctly and lives in it, such a person breaks the knot of ignorance."

Avidyā-granthiṁ vikiratī: It tears it apart and scatters it into pieces. It scatters the knot of the ignorance which has caused us to believe that we are here as isolated individuals and the world is outside.

SECTION 2

This is Section 2 of Chapter 2.

Āviḥ saṁnihitaṁ guhācaraṁ nāma mahat padam atraitat samarpitam, ejat praṇan nimiṣac ca yad eat jānatha sad asad vareṇyam param vijñānād yad variṣṭham prajānām (2.2.1). Manifest outside is this very thing that is the deepest source of our aspirations. Verily in front of our eyes is manifest that very thing which is inconceivable otherwise. The deepest within is also there as the perceivable form before the senses. It is deepest in the heart, no doubt, but it is also capable of appearing before our very eyes as the thing that we see. This Brahman is the great manifested support of all beings. It is the cause of all our experiences. It is very close to us, nearer than our neck, yet inside in the cavity of the heart. Everything that breathes, everything that is alive, all beings whether moving or not moving, anything that winks, all these are rooted this one single being as spokes are fixed on the

hub of a wheel. It is the cause of both the gross and the subtle. It is the most adorable of all beings.

Tadd ha tad-vanaṁ nāma, tad-vanam ity upāsitavyam (Kena Up. 4.6). How do you adorn Brahman as the most lovable of all beings, the dearest of objects? Varenyam: *Varenya* is the adorable. It is adorable because it is great and grand, and adorable because it is lovable and dear. It has two aesthetic characteristics, sublimity and beauty, and both are to be seen in God – this great Brahman Tattva, the Atma Tattva.

Might and attraction – both qualities are in Godhead. Very few things combine these characteristics. There is great strength in a bulldozer; it can crush us if we go near it, but it has no beauty. It does not attract us, and we do not want to go on looking at it. It has a great force, a crushing force, great power, but no beauty. But certain beautiful things have no power, such as a flower in the garden. A rose, a jasmine, a lotus is very beautiful, but is not strong and powerful like an elephant. God is power and beauty combined.

"How do we adore Brahman?" the Kenopanishad student asked the Guru. We should adore Brahman as lovable. Actually, the mind will not concentrate on God unless He is beautiful, attractive and lovable. If He terrible and fearsome, the mind will not concentrate on Him. We cannot work by fear; we can work only by love. This applies not only to factories and offices, but also in the spiritual field to the work called meditation. God cannot threaten us so that we may worship Him. God can only attract us.

It is Aristotle who mentioned in his metaphysics that God pulls the world towards Himself as the beloved pulls the lover. These are examples and illustrations which defy logical considerations and mathematical calculations. Love is not logic and it is not mathematics, but it is something more than this. It is more precise than mathematics and more exact than any kind of calculation that we can think of, and greater than logic. Logic and mathematics are the greatest of sciences, so to say, but love is a greater science; and in the spiritual field especially, it is this that acts. The love of God,

called *mumukshutva*, is the source of the student's success in the field of yoga.

Yad arcimad yad aṇubhyo'ṇu ca, yasmin lokā nihitā lokinas ca, tad etad akṣaram brahma sa prāṇas tad u vāṇ manaḥ, tad etat satyam, tad amṛtam, tad veddhavyam, saumya, viddhi (2.2.2): That great Reality, which has been described in cosmological terms in the earlier mantras, is manifesting its radiance in the form of this creation. The world as an emanation from God is actually the rays of this Supreme Being manifesting themselves, as it were. It is the light of Brahman that is visible here as the world of perception, light that is condensed into solid matter but is nevertheless more subtle than even the subtlest atomic particles of life. It is *arcimad* and also *anubhyo'nu*, meaning radiance and subtler than the subtlest. It is subtle because of its not being an object of perception. All that can be conceived, thought of, spoken about or perceived are gross in their form. But this one, which is the knower and the seer of things and cannot in any way be equated anywhere near objectivity of any kind, should naturally be very subtle. It cannot be known at all, inasmuch as it is the knower of things. Inasmuch as it is the knower of things, it cannot be known; therefore, it is *anu*, subtle.

Yasmin lokā nihitā lokinas ca: All this weighty mass of physical manifestation, this physical cosmos, as large as it is, together with all the inhabitants of this world, is rooted, fixed in this subtlest of realities. The subtler a thing is, the more powerful it is. A strong electric current, which is not a physical object like tangible bricks or stones, etc., may break a mountain and reduce it to powder if its voltage is sufficiently intense. Where is this subtlety, the invisibility of this energy called electric power? We cannot even see it with our eyes, but it can damage everything and dismantle huge structures. The subtlest of things is also the strongest of things and, therefore, the weighty mass of the physical manifestation of the world is nowhere in comparison with this subtlest invisible reality on which everything is fixed. Invisible things control visible objects. The visible world is

not the real. The real is that which cannot be seen. The invisible is the real. The more invisible and subtle the thing becomes, the more real also it is.

Tad etad akṣaram brahma: This it is that they call the imperishable Brahman. Sa prāṇaḥ: That also is the vitality of the Cosmos, as well as the individual. Tad u vāṇ: That also is the reason why we speak. The energy that is necessary for the modulation of the vocal cords in the articulation of sounds is itself manifested in one form. Tad u vāṇ manaḥ: That is the mind that thinks. Tad etat satyam: It is the law, it is the rule, it is the regulation, it is the system, it is the order that maintains this Cosmos – satyam. Satyameva jayathe: This great order is the Truth of truths. It is the will of the Absolute; it reigns supreme, triumphs always, and anything other than that cannot triumph.

Tad amṛtam: It is immortal nectar. See it as delicious honey. Immortal experience does not mean just existing for a long time, doing nothing. That is not immortality. It is a durationless experience where the concept of individual existence is completely abolished and transcended. For us who are living in a world of space and time, for us who are physical bodies, to be immortal would seem like living for a long time in some place, without dying. This is a crude, childish idea of deathlessness. That which is deathlessness is also not physical. That which is not physical is also not in space and time; therefore, it is not in some place that it may endure for a long time. The very idea or notion of immortality has to be reevaluated. Tad veddhavyam: This great being is our aim.

You have to hit it as you hit an object with an arrow. Oh dear brother, disciple, friend, student, whoever you are, saumya. Oh blessed soul, seeker of Truth, listen to me. Hit this object by the power of concentration as an archer hits a target with an arrow that he discharges from a bent bow. In the third mantra, the practice of spirituality, or *sadhana*, is compared to an archer employing an arrow shot through a bow for the purpose of hitting a target. Now what is this

arrow? What is this target? What is the bow in the case of this *sadhana*, the spiritual practice? Upanishad knowledge is the bow. With the help of the knowledge that you have gained by a study of the Upanishads, and by deep contemplation on the Upanishads, consider that as the great weapon. Upanishad is a great weapon.

Mahāstraṁ: It is the bow. Hold it in your hand and bend it, strike the string by the power of the concentration of your mind through analysis of the meaning of the teachings of the Upanishads, and dwell into their true significance. With the power of intense devotion to it, bend the bow and pitch the arrow, which is the act of concentration. The mind is the arrow here, which is to be fixed on the bow of the knowledge of the Upanishad gained by deep thought and study. And the bow has to be bent by intense longing.

Tad-bhāvagatena cetasā lakṣyaṁ tad evākṣaraṁ, saumya viddhi (2.2.3): That imperishable being is the target which you have to hit with this arrow of your mind struck and discharged by the bow of Upanishadic knowledge, and bent with tremendous strength arisen from your longing for liberation. This is the meaning of the third mantra: dhanur gṛhīvtā aupaniṣadam mahāstraṁ śaraṁ hy upāsā-niśitaṁ saṁdadhīta, āyamya tad-bhāvagatena cetasā lakṣyaṁ tad evākṣaraṁ, saumya viddhi (2.2.3). Upanishad is the knowledge which gives you the strength to embark on this great adventure of spiritual experience. That knowledge of the Upanishad is compared here to a bow. Mind is the arrow, the longing for the liberation of the soul is the power with which you bend the bow and strike the string, and the target is the Imperishable Reality. Thus is the analogy of the bow and the arrow in the case of *sadhana,* or yoga practice. It is again briefly repeated in the next verse.

Praṇavo dhanuḥ, śaro hy ātmā, brahma tal lakṣyam ucyate, apramattena veddhavyam, śaravat tanmayo bhavet (2.2.4): Pranava, Omkara is the bow. It was said earlier that Upanishad knowledge is the bow. Now it is said that Pranava is the bow. The idea is that the Pranava, or Om, is the essence

of Upanishadic knowledge, and the Mandukya Upanishad is supposed to be the quintessence of all the Upanishads.

Mandukyam ekam evalam mumukshunam vimuktaye (Muktika 1.27): For the sake of the liberation of the spirit, the Mandukya Upanishad alone is sufficient. This is a statement made by the Muktika Upanishad. Now, the Mandukya Upanishad is nothing but an exposition of Pranava. So in a sense it means the quintessence of Upanishadic teachings is Omkara, and so there is a pertinence here. It is appropriate that this verse says that Pranava or Omkara is the bow, equal to saying that Upanishadic knowledge is the bow.

Ātmā: The individual soul which seeks liberation is the arrow. Brahman is the target. With great concentration, with unwavering attention, you must aim this arrow on that object. As the arrow merges in the object by striking it directly, the Atman, this individual, this mind, has to get dissolved in that object. The concentration of the archer in respect of a target is well known. He does not know what is happening to him on either side. His ability to concentrate on one point is such that he will not see anything other than the object.

There is an illustration in the Mahabharata. During the tournament in which Drona tested the archery of the Pandavas and the Kauravas, he hung a little wooden bird on the branch of a tree. The image had all the features of a bird, such as eyes, beak, etc. The idea was that the archer should hit only the eye, not any other part of the bird, and he should see only that. The eye of the archer should concentrate itself on only the bird's eye, and he should not go on thinking varieties of things. Drona called Yudhishthira. "Come on. What do you see there?" "I see a bird on the tree," replied Yudhisththira. "No. You are no good. Go to that side," Drona said. Then he called Bhima. "What do you see?" "I see a bird tied to a branch of a tree." "No good. Go that side." Then he tested two other brothers, and they also failed. Then Arjuna was called and asked, "What do you see?" "I see a black spot, and I see nothing else," he replied.

That is the concentration that is expected in meditation on Brahman. It has already been mentioned that it is very subtle. How could the gross mind, accustomed to thinking of objects, succeed in thinking of subtle things? Brahman is subtle because of its universality on one hand and its inwardness on the other hand. The combination of these two aspects is very difficult to consider in the mind. Either we think of an expanse or we think something inside us. It is not merely an expanse outside, and it is also not something sitting inside us. It is the blend of the inwardness of subjectivity together with the expanse of objectivity, the infinity. As these two thoughts cannot combine easily, it is hard for the mind to concentrate on Brahman. It can concentrate on a form – on idols, on concepts, on an image that it places before itself – because it is outside. But Brahman is not outside. How will we concentrate on it? So, apramattena veddhavyam: Very cautious you have to be, very careful. Do not be in a hurry. Then your mind will unite itself with the object of your meditation as the arrow merges into the object.

Yasmin dyauḥ pṛthivī cāntrikṣam otam manaḥ saha prāṇaiś ca sarvaiḥ, tam evaikaṁ jānatha ātmānam, anya vāco vimuñcatha, amṛtasyaiṣa setuḥ (2.2.5): It is that on which space itself is fixed, which is the foundation of the whole Earth. The entire space is an object in front of that. It is subtler, larger than space. And all things, including the mind and *pranas*, are fixed on that Reality. That alone should be the goal of your life.

Tam evaikaṁ jānatha ātmānam: Know it as the deepest reality of your own heart, Atman. Do not speak too much. Anya vāco vimuñcatha: When you speak, speak only about the Atman. Do not speak about anything else. All other words are weariness of speech. Therefore, concentrate yourself on this great ideal of your life, and mind your business, as they say. Anya vāco vimuñcatha: Do not engage yourself in other kinds of business in this world. This should be your only business, your only aim of work, and nothing else should attract your attention. Amṛtasyaiṣa setuḥ: This *sadhana*, this practice, if it

could be carried on successfully, will be the bridge to Immortality.

Arā iva ratha-nābhau saṁhatā yatra nāḍyaḥ sa eṣo'ntaś carate bahudhā jāyamānaḥ, aum iti evem dhyāyathātmānam, svasti vaḥ pārāya tamasaḥ parastāt (2.2.6): All the nerve currents of the body and the divinities of the cosmos are fixed in this Universal consciousness Brahman, as spokes in a wheel are fixed in the hub of the wheel. This one on which everything is fixed is moving inside the heart and manifests itself in various forms, as the mind conceptualises a variety of objects – antaś carate bahudhā jāyamānaḥ.

It was said we must meditate on Brahman. How do we meditate on Brahman? The prescription is given here. Aum iti evem dhyāya: Meditate on Brahman as Om, by recitation of Om. Deeply chant Om like a vibration rising from the naval to the heart, as it were, and moving upwards through the heart and the throat until it becomes an articulated sound through the vocal organs. Inversely, when the sound formation of Om is recited through the vocal organs, it becomes subtler and subtler as the chanting becomes calmer and calmer, more and more inward, and becomes inverted into its original source until it reaches its vibratory condition where sound is absent. And this ultimate vibration that is the final shape of Om is identical with cosmic power, the very will of God. Therefore, meditate on Brahman as Om. Om is the name of Brahman.

Tasya vācakaḥ praṇavaḥ (Yoga Sutras 1.27), says Patanjali. We want to call God by some name, and we cannot call Him by any other name except Om. This is because all other names – such as Rama, Krishna, Govinda, tree, stone, water, mountain – are words that we use to name particular objects. Every word in language has a particular object in front of it, located in some place, whereas Brahman is not an object located in some place. Hence, any word that can connote only a located object will not suffice in defining Brahman, which is everywhere. We require a universal name to denote Universal Being. The universal name is Om, according to

universal vibrations. Therefore, through Om meditate on Brahman. Aum iti eveṁ dhyāyathātmānam: Thus contemplate the Atman through Om.

Svasti vaḥ pārāya tamasaḥ parastāt: The Guru is blessing the disciples. "May good betide you. May God speak to you for crossing beyond this portion of *samsara*, beyond this darkness of ignorance." Tamasaḥ parastāt: May you be blessed. Here is the blessing from the Guru, as the teacher of this Upanishad. Svasti vaḥ pārāya tamasaḥ parastāt: May you succeed. Bon voyage!

Yah sarvajñaḥ sarva-vid yasyaiṣa mahimā bhuvi divye brahma-pure hy eṣa vyomny ātmā pratiṣṭhitaḥ (2.2.7): All knowing and aware of all things in detail; these words were uttered earlier also. Sarvajñaḥ has been interpreted as the knower of everything in generality. Sarva-vid is one who knows everything in detail. So this Supreme Being which is cosmically aware of everything in general as well as in detail has its glory sung in this world in the form of this creation. Yasyaiṣa mahimā bhuvi: This Earth, this glory that you see in this world, this very universe you see, is the encomium, the praise of God. The whole universe is praising God in all its forms, in all its shapes, through all its historical processes and every shape that it takes through evolution. The world as a whole is a total prayer that is offered to God by His own creation for having created the world. Sometimes it is said that God created the world so that it may pray to Him – yasyaiṣa mahimā bhuvi.

Divye brahma-pure hy eṣa vyomny ātmā pratiṣṭhitaḥ: In the highest heaven, whose representation is within our own heart as the subtle spiritual lotus, the city of Brahman, as it is called, in this firmament of the spirit, in the lotus of the heart, the highest reality is planted. This mind formed, the *prana* formed, and the physical body formed; all forms are its manifestations.

Mano-mayaḥ prāṇa-śarīra-netā pratiṣṭhito'nne hṛdayaṁ sannidhāya (2.2.8): In *anna*, which is the physical body, in *prana*, which is the subtle vibration inside and in *manas*,

which is the mind, it is fixed and is operating. Tad vijñānena paripaśyanti dhīrāḥ ānanda-rūpam amṛtaṁ yad vibhāti (2.2.8): When this glory is beheld within oneself, it manifests itself as bliss. What kind of experience do we have when we contact God? Bliss is the experience. *Ananda* is the joy that accrues by contact with the Supreme Being. This *ananda* is not like the ordinary sense pleasures to which we are accustomed here. Sense pleasure is not a real joy. Even mental contemplation of aesthetic objects cannot be regarded as the highest joy. This world cannot give us the highest joy, because our joys of the world are entangled in the heavy material of objectivity. Thus, Brahman bliss is quite different and inconceivable, and its subtlety and magnitude have been illustrated in that calculus of bliss we have in the Taitereya Upanishad, where it says that all the kinds of bliss that we can imagine in our mind are lower, and it is all multiplied by hundreds and hundreds in ascending series until we reach octillion multiplied states, as it were, where we will reach Brahman's quality.

Actually, octillion is not the end of this calculus. There is no end to it. It is infinity, but because we have to calculate and end somewhere, we end it with some particular statement; but actually, any amount of multiplication of sensory pleasure cannot give us Brahman bliss. Many untruths do not make one truth. Even if we multiply untruth by millions, does it become one truth? Likewise, this untruth of the pleasures of sense that we have in this world will not give us Brahman bliss by any amount of calculus or multiplication. It is *ananda*, pure and simple, Sat-Chit-Ananda combined, pure universal Existence, inseparable Consciousness and undiluted Bliss. All the knots of the heart are broken at one stroke when this experience supervenes.

Bhidyate hṛdaya-granthiś chidyante sarva-saṁśayāḥ, kṣīyante cāsya karmāṇi tasmin dṛṣṭe parāvare (2.2.9): I have already explained the knots of the heart – Brahma-granti, Rudra-granti and Vishnu-granti. They are actually *avidya*, *kama* and karma – ignorance, desire and action. These knots are broken at once by the rise of the knowledge of Brahman.

Chidyante sarva-saṁśayāḥ: All doubts are dispelled in one second. You will have no doubt in your mind; everything is so clear as if in a midday sun. Kṣīyante cāsya karmāṇi: All the karmas will be destroyed. All the effects of karmas that cause rebirth will be burnt into ashes. Tasmin dṛṣṭe parāvare: When does this happen? It happens only when you behold the great Being which is high and low combined.

Here the word 'karma' is used in the plural. A controversy has arisen by commentators interpreting the word 'karmāṇi' as plural. How many karmas are there? Plural implies more than two. In Sanskrit grammar, plural is not dual, it is more than dual. In the English language there are only two such sets, and more than one is plural. But in Sanskrit, more than one is dual and more than dual is plural. Here 'karmāṇi' is plural, which means more than two. Does it mean that more than two karmas are destroyed, or are only two karmas destroyed? There are three kinds of karmas – *sanchita*, *agami* and *prarabdha*. Usually it is said that *prarabdha* cannot be destroyed, and only *sanchita* and *agami* are destroyed, which are the storehouse of karma and also the effects of karma that are performed in the present world. They are destroyed, but the karma that has given birth to this body cannot be destroyed as long as the body lasts. This is the usual view of philosophers.

Then why is the word 'karma' used in the plural? Some commentators say that *prarabdha* is also destroyed. By saying that, they imply that though the Jivanmukta Purusha actually appears to be living in a body, moving about, speaking, eating, and doing things like anybody else, he is above this body. To others, the body may look like a moving vehicle; but for his own self, his consciousness has spread throughout all bodies. The Jivanmukta does not see himself in one body only. "I'm going" – that consciousness has been transcended by him. The Jivanmukta Purusha's consciousness is in everybody's body, and therefore whether or not the *prarabdha* karma is relatively working is immaterial for him because it is virtually destroyed. So, all the three are destroyed. This is another meaning that is given

to this plural word 'karmāṇi'. However, it matters little to us because we have all the three karmas with us. Tasmin dṛṣṭe parāvare: Having reached the Supreme Being, your karmas are destroyed.

Hiraṇmaye pare kośe virajaṁ brahma niṣkaram, tac chubhraṁ jyotiṣāṁ jyotiḥ tad yad ātma-vido viduḥ (2.2.10): Light of lights is this Brahman. The Sun and Moon do not shine then. Within the golden sheath of the intellect of the human being, this pure consciousness scintillates like a spark which is without smoke and without any kind of limitation or location, the purest of purities, the light of lights. That is beheld by those people who have known the Atman as identical with the light that they behold in other bodies also. The whole world will look like a mass of radiance to the Jivanmukta Purusha. Just as if we gaze at the Sun for some time we will see dark spots as if the Sun is everywhere because of the effect produced by the force of its light on the eye, likewise is the Jivanmukta Purusha's perception of the Atman. It does not mean that he sees the Atman only within himself and he sees people moving about outside. It is not like that. He sees himself present and moving in all bodies. It is a cosmic experience incapable of articulation in ordinary words of language, and the less said about it the better.

Na tatra sūryo bhāti, na candra-tārakam, nemā vidyuto bhānti, kuto'yam agniḥ, tam eva bhāntam anubhāti sarvam, tasya bhāsā sarvam, idaṁ vibhāti (2.2.11): In that realm of eternal light there is no radiance of the Sun. This brilliance of the Sun which is so intolerable to our eyes is like a shadow cast by that eternal light. Like candle flames do not shine before the light of the Sun, the Sun, the Moon, the stars, fire, and all the luminaries of the world do not shed their light in that eternal radiance. There is no Sun or Moon, no stars, no lightning, no fire or any kind of illumination that we can think of. All these illuminations are external, but this great eternal light is internal, and that is the difference. The internal light is brighter than the external light.

Actually, the light of the Sun and the light of everything that illumines objects in this world is a frequency of radiation, and they look like a light that illumines objects only when the frequency of the emanation from the object that sheds light is equivalent in ratio to the frequency of the structure of our conceptive organ. There are higher frequencies and lower frequencies of radiation, and we do not see them. More intense forms of light cannot be seen with the eyes, and very low frequencies also cannot be seen. We cannot see heaven because it is in a higher frequency, and we cannot see hell because it is in a lower frequency. We are in the middle. Anyway, the objective lights of the Sun, Moon and so on do not play any role in that realm of eternal daylight.

Na tatra sūryo bhāti, na candra-tārakam, nemā vidyuto bhānti, kuto'yam agniḥ: All the luminaries borrow light from that Eternity, as it were. A fraction of the intense incalculable frequency of the eternal radiance is responsible for the lights that are considered as great lights in this world.

Jyotiṣām jyotih: That is light of all lights. These are lights in the world, no doubt, but that is the light of even these lights. Due to the light of that Eternal Being, everything shines. We are able to cognise the presence of things on account of the radiance that emanates from within us. We do not know things in the world because of sunlight. Sunlight cannot create knowledge, because it is inert in its nature. The awareness that there is an object – this world – cannot arise merely by shedding a ray of sunlight on it. Who is responsible for the knowledge, which is the light shed on the objects? It is our Self consciousness. Self consciousness is the greatest light, and it does not require an external light for it to perform its functions. All this world is illuminated, illumined by this great internal light which is the universal light: tasya bhāsā sarvam, idaṁ vibhāti.

Brahmaivedam amṛtam purastād brahma, paśсad brahma, dakṣinataś cottareṇa, adhaścordhvaṁ ca prasṛtam brahmaivedaṁ viśvam idaṁ variṣṭham (2.2.12): Where is this

eternal Brahman? How far it is from me? It is this eternal, immortal Brahman that is shining in front of us. It is this eternal Brahman that is at the back of us. It is this eternal Brahman that is to our right side. It is the eternal Brahman that is to our left side. It is this very Brahman that is above. It is that very Brahman that is below. Everywhere it is spreading itself out, and the whole universe is its radiance.

Brahmaivedaṁ viśvam idaṁ variṣṭham: The plenum of felicity, which is Bhuma, the Absolute, manifests itself as this plenum of this world. All the light and all the joy and all the perfection that we apparently see in things in this world are little titbits.

Mātrām upajīvanti (Brihad. Up. 4.3.32), says the Brihadaranyaka Upanishad. We can imagine how many joys there are in this world. We can count them all. We can enumerate all the millions and millions of avenues of joy that can be experienced in this world, and we can enumerate the most intense form of joy that we can experience in this world, but all this put together is only a jot, a spoonful, as it were, of the Brahman bliss. *Matra* – it is less than a spoonful, and the whole universe of joy is sustained by that little drop of Brahman Bliss. It is that bliss that is sustaining us. If joy were not to be in this world, who would be able to live in this world even for few minutes? If joy were not to be there in breathing, who would breathe? If joy were not to be there in mere existence, who would like to exist? There is joy in this very space itself; otherwise, we will not feel happy by finding accommodation in space.

We will find this Brahman manifest from all the directions in various shapes and forms causing us, bringing about before us, sources of joy. There is nothing in this world which cannot give us happiness some time or the other. There are things in this world which are objects of our neglect. We do not consider their existence at all. There are so many trees in the forest. What does it matter to us? Let them be there. And so much water is flowing in the Ganga, but it does not matter to us. There are so many hills; what does it matter? They do matter. A time will come, a condition

will arise in which we will find that even a straw will give us support when we are drowning in the flood of this world. A mouse saved a lion, and a straw can protect us. There is nothing that cannot attract us, cannot sustain us, cannot give us joy and support sometime or the other, in one condition or the other, because of the fact that Brahman is spread out in all things.

Chapter 3

SECTION 1

Now we go to Section 1 of Chapter 3. The same verse that occurred earlier illustrating two birds perching on a single tree is before us.

Dvā suparṇā sayujā sakhāyā samānaṁ vṛkṣam pariṣasvajāte, tayor anyaḥ pippalaṁ svādv atty anaśnann anyo'bhicakaśīti (3.1.1): There are two birds in this tree of life. This tree of life may be either this body of the individual, or it may be the entire creation itself. Ishvara and Jiva are present in the world of creation as well as in the human body. They are friends. God and the Individual are like Nara and Narayana of ancient mythology. They are inseparable brothers, one connected with the other perpetually. These are compared to birds living on a single tree which is this vast creation. And they enjoy their existence on the tree. The only difference is, one of these birds is busy enjoying the delicious fruit that is of the tree and the other bird is not interested in eating anything. It is merely looking on, unconcerned and unattached.

This unattached bird is God, Ishvara, seated in your own heart and everywhere in this world. The bird that is eating the sweet fruit of this tree is the individual soul, the mind-body complex. So there are two phases of experience going on in one's own body: a consciousness that is totally detached, and a consciousness that is very much involved. The detached consciousness in us is called Kutastha-chaitanya. It stands uncontaminated even in the state of deep sleep, and enables us to regain our consciousness of identity of personality when we awake the next morning and feel that we are there.

This consciousness of our being the same person that we were yesterday is not the action of the mind, not of the sense organs, not the body. The body cannot know anything; it is unconscious, and the mind and the senses were not functioning in sleep. So who told us that we existed

yesterday? There is some minimal awareness, consciousness qua being, as it is called, which is our essence that existed in deep sleep, and that is responsible for our memory of the fact of our having existed yesterday also. That is the uncontaminated detached consciousness in us. It is not connected with body, mind and sense organs. That is the *Ishvara-tattva* that is in us. The *jiva-tattva* is our own selves. The very consciousness that is contaminated by the body, mind and sense organs becomes *jiva*. Consciousness connected with the sense organs, mind and body is the *jiva*, the individual, so-called. The detached consciousness, unconnected with these, is Ishvara himself because the general consciousness we experience in the state of deep sleep unconnected with the senses, body and mind is Universal in its nature. Because consciousness cannot be located only in one place, cannot be divided into parts, cannot have fractions, it is therefore Universal.

Hence, the Universal being is inside us. In the deep sleep state we land ourselves on it, as it were, and feel the bliss of it so intensely that we do not like to wake up in the morning. So intense is the joy of sleep that we want to go to sleep again and again. But when we wake up, we are once again the *jiva*, the fruit-eating bird in this world tree of *samsara*, and not even conscious that there is another bird sitting there, always uncontaminated.

Are we aware that we have a universal background in us? No, never. We always think we are Mr. and Mrs. So-and-so – this body, that body, this individual, that individual, performing this work and that work. Has anyone time to believe that there is a universal ocean at the back of our consciousness? We are floating on the sea of Absolute Being. Do we know that? Has anybody had time to think like this? No. Because we are eating the sweet fruit of life, we are very busy indeed. Let the Universal be there; what does it matter to us? So this bird that is eating the sweet fruit does not even know that another bird is sitting here, as it is so much engrossed in the indulgence of the bliss, joy, pleasure of eating the sweet fruit. These are the two birds – dvā suparṇā.

Samāne vṛkṣe puruṣo nimagno'nīśayā śocati muhyamānaḥ, juṣṭam yadā paśyaty anyam īśam asya mahimānam iti, vīta-śokah (3.1.2): Helplessly sunk in the apparent joy of the sweetness of the fruit, one of these birds also is sunk in sorrow at the same time because we do not merely suck the fruit, the fruit also sucks us. We do not merely get stuck in the object, the objects sticks to us. The more we try to grab objects, the more will objects try to grab us, like crocodiles. If we try to grab a crocodile with our hands, it will grab us with greater force.

In the Upanishads the sense organs are called *graha* because they grasp, and the objects are called *atigraha*, the greater grabbers. Our condition may be really pitiable if we give a long rope to these sense organs and allow them to go on grabbing objects, because the result would be that the objects will grab us with a greater force. The result would be utter helplessness, and one will be reduced to slavery to such an extent that it will be difficult to distinguish between oneself and the object outside. The slave is like an object; he has no subjectivity. He does not think in terms of himself; he always thinks in terms of his master. So we are like slaves thinking in terms of our master which is this world of objects, and we have no independence ourselves. We are caught and bound in the chain of this helplessness caused by our indulgence in the objects which appear to be our masters.

Samāne vṛkṣe puruṣo nimagno'nīśayā śocati muhyamānaḥ: Deluded is this bird that is indulging itself like this. Juṣṭam yadā paśyaty anyam īśam: When by chance this indulgent bird has time to look around and see another bird there seated, the most adorable being, the moment we behold it, our bondage is snapped. The vision of God is also the end of all sorrow. The consciousness of Universality is the cessation of attachment to particularity. But we are not able to maintain an awareness of this Universal in us. We cannot see that there is a bird called the Universal in us. We see only the other one, the object in front of us. The moment we become

aware of the Universal bird, the consciousness of its existence will redeem us at once.

Juṣṭam yadā paśyaty anyam īśam asya mahimānam iti, vīta-śokah: When the glory of that Universal bird is seen, all the sorrow of indulgence and involvement in things in the world ceases at once, as night departs when the sun rises. They are simultaneous, and do not come one after the other.

Yadā paśyaḥ paśyate rukma-varṇaṁ kartāram īśam puruṣam brahma-yonim, tadā vidvān puṇya-pāpe vidhūya nirañjanaḥ paramaṁ sāmyam upaiti (3.1.3): When this seer, the individual soul, beholds this glorious, luminous, radiant, Universal bird nearby – which is really the ruler, the originator, the controller of all things, which is the seat of Brahman itself, the supreme Purusha, Mahapurusha, Purushottama – then the knower of this Universal bird sheds all the effects of *punya* and *papa*, merits and demerits. Freed from contact with the effects of good and bad deeds, one attains equality with the Universal. The moment we are conscious of the Universal, we have become one with the Universal. Here in this case, knowledge is the same as being. In ordinary life, knowledge is not being. If we know there is lot of money in the bank, it does not follow that we possess that money. In ordinary life knowledge is not power, and it is also not being. But here knowledge is, at the same time, power and being. The being of the object is at once the being of the knowledge of that object. The Knower of Brahman becomes Brahman. Universal equality is attained by the consciousness of there being such a thing called Universality. Therefore, we have to awaken ourselves to the consciousness of our true nature, which is Universal existence and not this body-mind complex.

Prāṇo hy eṣa yaḥ sarva-bhūtair vibhāti vijānan vidvān bhavate nātivādī, ātma-krīḍa ātma-ratiḥ kriyāvān eṣa brahma-vidāṁ viriṣṭhah (3.1.4): This great Hiranyagarbha Prana, the Universal life principle, is visible in the form of the life of every little creature in this world. Having known this, our mouth is shut and we will not speak afterwards, like a

drowning person whose mouth is filled with water. Eternity will fill us to such an extent that we will have no occasion to open our mouth, and we will not speak. Silence is golden. Not merely is it a policy, but it is a result that follows from the highest vision. The more we know, the less we speak. As it is said, it is only half-filled pots that make lots of noise.

One who is filled with this knowledge of the Universal Prana operating through all life in this world is the true knower, and he does not speak afterwards. What does he do then? Ātma-krīḍa ātma-ratiḥ kriyāvān eṣa brahma-vidāṁ viriṣṭhah: He is the Knower supreme. He is the best of the knowers of Brahman. He rejoices not with things outside; he rejoices with himself – ātma-krīḍa. He plays with himself, he rejoices with himself, he works through himself, not with instruments outside. God does not have instruments like a pickaxe, a fountain pen, etc. By His very existence, He works. So is this knower of Brahman capable of working miracles in this world by his very existence. The word used here is brahma-vidāṁ viriṣṭhah, which means the best of the knowers of Brahman.

There are four stages of Brahman knowledge described in the Yoga Vasishtha, and these stages are called Brahma-vid, Brahma-vid-vara, Brahma-vid-variya and Brahma-vid-varishta. There are seven stages of knowledge in the ascent of the spirit to God – *subecha, vicharana, tanumanasi, sattvapatti, asamsakti, padartha-bhavana* and *turiya*. The fourth stage is called *sattvapatti*, where light flashes from Brahman, and that condition of awareness of the flash of light from Brahman is called the state of Brahma-vid. Then the next stage comes. When we are totally detached from everything on account of perception of this light everywhere, that is Brahma-vid-vara. When we see consciousness illuminating through every brick, every stone and every atom, that stage is Brahma-vid-variya. Then we feel that the light is scintillating within us also and we become indistinguishable from this mass of light everywhere; that is *turiya*. Such a stage is called Brahma-vidvarishta. He plays with himself, rejoices with himself, is satisfied with himself,

and he works through the soul and not by any kind of external instruments. Such a great soul, a true knower of Brahman supreme, is called Brahma-vid-varishta – eṣa brahma-vidāṁ viriṣṭhah.

Bṛhac ca tad divyam acintya-rūpaṁ sūkṣmāc ca tat sūkṣma-taraṁ vibhati, dūrāt sudūre tad ihāntike ca paśyatsv ihaiva nihitam guhāyām (3.1.7): Bṛhac is this Brahman, larger than space is its size; divyam: divinity supreme; acintya-rūpaṁ: unthinkable with its form; sūkṣmāc ca tat sūkṣma-taraṁ vibhati: subtler than the subtle is its inner subjectivity. First it was said it is larger than the largest. Now we are told it is subtler than the subtlest, smaller than the smallest. Dūrāt sudūre tad ihāntike ca: Most remote it is, and also very near it is. It is as far from us as the horizon. We cannot touch it, we do not know where it is. The horizon recedes further and further the more we move in its direction, and we will never touch it. The end of space cannot be seen. Space is so far, but this is even further. That is the distance between us and God. But it is so near; our very self is Atman – dūrāt sudūre tad ihāntike ca.

Paśyatsv ihaiva nihitam guhāyām: It is in the cave of the heart of the individual and also in the cave of the heart of the universe. It is the soul of the universe and is also soul of every individual being. The question of distance does not arise here in consciousness. The ideas of remoteness and nearness, etc., arise from our living in space, time and objectivity. As there is no distance or measuring of separation of one thing from another, and there is no duration of time, and there is nothing external – neither space nor time, nor objectivity – the statement that it is farther than the farthest and nearer than the nearest has to be taken in the sense of a metaphor explaining that Brahman is everywhere in all things. It is the deepest root of our heart.

Na cakṣuṣā gṛhyate nāpi vācā nānyair devaiḥ tapasā karmaṇā vā, jñāna-prasādena viśuddha-sattvas tatas tu taṁ pasyate niṣkalaṁ dhyāyamānaḥ (3.1.8): Not with the eyes it is to be seen, not with the speech it is to be described. No god

can help us in reaching it. We can worship any god, but we will reach only that god and nothing beyond. All the gods were created after the manifestation of space and time. As they are effects, how can they know the cause? Brahman exists prior to all these gods, and so we cannot know it by worship of these divinities. We also cannot know it merely by intense *tapas* of the body and the mind without concentration of consciousness. Actions, which produce perishable fruit, also cannot take us there because, as already mentioned in earlier verses, the perishable results of karma cannot take us to the imperishable. Not by eyes, not by speech, not by worship of divinities, not by sheer austerity, not by actions of any kind is this Brahman to be known. Not by work, not by progeny, not by wealth can this world of Brahman be attained. Only by true renunciation can it be attained.

Jñāna-prasādena viśuddha-sattvas tatas tu taṁ pasyate niṣkalaṁ dhyāyamānaḥ: By knowledge alone is this Brahman realised. How is this knowledge attained? It is attained by the dispersal of the clouds that are covering consciousness in the form of ignorance, desire and impulsion to action. As already mentioned, they are called *avidya*, *kama* and *karma*, the three *grantis*, three knots – *tripura*.

There were three cities of three demons, called Tripuras, as is elaborately described in the Siva Puranas and also in the Drona Parva of the Mahabharata. One city is built of iron, another of silver, the third of gold, and they are all suspended in space. The power of the demons occupying these cities was such that nobody could face them; they controlled even the gods. Lord Siva struck down these three cities with one arrow. These demons had great powers obtained by drinking from a nectarine pot in their house every day. As long as they drank the nectar, nobody could face them. So Brahma, Vishnu and Rudra joined together and hatched some plan to see that these three cities were destroyed, which could not easily be done. Brahma became a cow with a calf, and drank the nectar in their house, and when the demons returned they found the pot empty. Vishnu became the arrow to ensure that it would

hit the target, and Rudra used his bow to shoot the arrow of Vishnu, which went straight to the three cities and destroyed them at one stroke, just as Rama cut down seven trees suddenly, abruptly, with the force of the single arrow that he discharged, as told in the Kishkinda Kanda of Ramayana.

In a similar manner, we have to break this fortress of *avidya*, *kama* and *karma* in our hearts. They are not easy of overcoming. The profundity of our ignorance is known very well. We can never have even the inkling of the existence of God anywhere in this world. We have to scratch our head day in and day out to bring into our mind the little faith that God must be existing. Otherwise, for all practical purposes, He does not exist. Who is going to think of God day in and day out? We have other works, and therefore this idea never arises. Such is the depth of our ignorance, and the impulsion of our desires. This must be done, that must be done, this project, that project, this industry, and so on. We set up plants to increase industry. We have so many desires, so many desires, because the idea of God has gone and action immediately rises like a whirlwind. We are busy with what we are doing every day due to our desire created by the ignorance of the existence of God. *Avidya*, *kama* and *karma* cannot easily be broken. We require Rudra's power and Vishnu's arrow, and the nectar which is the joy of the sense objects should be cut by the discriminating faculty of the intellect, which is the seat of Brahma. Knowledge alone is the source of this dispelling of ignorance: Jñāna-prasādena viśuddha-sattvas.

Tatas tu taṁ pasyate niṣkalaṁ dhyāyamānaḥ: Then with deep meditation, we will thus know that radiance which is within us and that radiance which is spreading itself around. The whole world is the radiance of Brahman.

Eṣo'ṇur ātmā cetasā veditavyo yasmin prāṇaḥ pañcadhā saṁviveśa, prāṇaiś cittaṁ sarvaṁ otam prajānām, yasmin viśuddhe vibhavaty eṣa ātmā (3.1.9): This subtle Atman is to be known only through intuition, in which the mind, the intellect, and the sense organs stand together as if they melt

into a single faculty. The mind thinks, the intellect understands, the eyes see, the ears hear, and so on, but intuition or insight is a single faculty which operates as sight, hearing, thinking, understanding and everything that the other functions are capable of reporting to us. Intuition is actually the soul operating from inside. The soul has no eyes and ears, and therefore the knowledge which the soul manifests from itself is not seeing, hearing, etc. It is direct, immediate apprehension. Here the word *'chetas'* is used, so it signifies the deepest intuition possible.

Yasmin prāṇaḥ pañcadhā saṁviveśa: The fivefold *pranas* and the mind are all located in this central function. The five *pranas* are *prana, apana, vyana, udhana* and *samana*. Prāṇaiś cittaṁ sarvaṁ otam prajānām: The mind is enveloped by the powers of the sense organs, and amidst these functions there is the Atman shining independently of these separated functions and yet causing the functions to take place independently. As the Sun who has no colour may appear as sevenfold in colour when its light is passed through a prism, for instance, the single faculty of intuitional apprehension may look like sensory operations, mental thinking, intellectual understanding, etc., because of the prism-like action taking place in the psyche of the individual through which the integral light of the Atman passes. This integral light is called intuition, insight, direct experience, etc. Subtle is this Atman, capable of being known only through inward intuition in which all the *pranas* and the sense organs are located, and in which the mind together with sense organs is fixed, in the midst of which this Atman shines.

Yam yaṁ lokam manasā saṁvibhātiviśuddha-sattvaḥ kāmayate yāṁś ca kāmān, taṁ taṁ lokaṁ jāyate tāṁś ca kāmāṁs tasmād ātmajñaṁ hy arcayed bhūti-kāmaḥ (3.1.10): When we apprehend this Self in direct experience, whatever we wish to have will be in our hand. Whatever world we want to reach will be reached by us instantaneously. It may be the highest heaven, and we shall be there instantly. Ancient Rishis, Narada and others, were of this power. Narada could traverse through all the worlds as we can move

through all the countries in this world with a vehicle. They have the capacity to adjust their spiritual personality to the conditions, laws and regulations of the different worlds. When they descend into the gross world they adjust their personality into the gross conditions necessary, when they go to the heavenly world they make their whole personality subtle, and they can even reach Brahmaloka as well. Narada is the son of Brahma himself. He can go to Vaikunta and accost Narayana. So is the case with the knower of Brahman: yam yaṁ lokam manasā saṁvibhāti.

Taṁ taṁ lokaṁ jāyate: All regions come under the control of this knower of Brahman. And all the visualisations through the mind as objects of desire also get fulfilled in an instant. There is no time process. The objects of desire do not come tomorrow, they come just now; and we do not reach a place after some time, but immediately. A spaceless movement and timeless achievement of purpose follows from the realisation of the Atman, which is eternity and space-like identity.

Therefore, it is proper for all people to worship a knower of Brahman. Because of the power of that person, the glory and greatness of that person who has known the Self, his blessing is wonderful. His blessing itself is a great virtuous benefit that accrues to us, because even to come in contact with a great soul should be regarded as the result of some meritorious deeds of the past. We shall not come in contact with anything worthwhile if our karmas do not permit.

Thus, the verse says that whatever world we contemplate in our mind, that we shall reach immediately, and whatever we think in our mind, that also will be materialised at once because of the power of the knowledge of the Atman. Hence the knower of the Atman should be worshipped by everybody who is intent on their own welfare.

SECTION 2

Sa vedaitat paramam brahma dhāma yatra viśvaṁ nihitam bhāti śubhram, upāste puruṣam ye hy akāmās te śukram etad ativartanti dhīrāḥ (3.2.1): Whoever knows this Brahman in which the Universe in all its vastness is fixed and which shines more radiantly than the Sun, and those people who are devoted to such a person without any kind of earthly desire, go beyond the chances of coming back to this world by rebirth. The possibility of rebirth is severed completely because the cause of rebirth, which is the remainder of the *sanchita* karmas, is burnt and becomes like a burnt seed.

The karma of the Jivanmukta Purusha is compared to a burnt seed or a burnt cloth. A burnt cloth may look like a cloth, but if we touch it, it is ashes. A burnt seed cannot germinate into a plant though it may look like a seed to all outside perceptions. So is the condition in this world of the knower of Brahman. He transcends the causes of rebirth – śukram etad ativartanti – and therefore people adore these great beings. By the vibration that automatically arises around this person, a kind of purifying atmosphere is created. There is an aura around a knower of Brahman which reaches some distance according to the intensity of the realisation. It may be some feet, some kilometres, or even longer distances. The light of the Atman emanating from within into longer distances outside the body is called the aura of a person. The radiance cannot be seen with the eyes, but those effects can be felt.

There was a great saint and sage called Raghavendra Swami, and his Samadhi is in Mantralaya, which is now in Andhra Pradesh. It seems that three astrologers met him and saw his horoscope to find out how long he would live. One of the astrologers said 100 years, another astrologer said 300 years, and the third astrologer said 700 years. How is it possible that three great astrologers say that he would live for 100, 300 or 700 years? The saint, who was present while this discussion was taking place, said that all three astrologers were correct. For 100 years his body will last, for

300 years people will read the works written by him, and for 700 years his aura will be felt around his Samadhi. This is the great proclamation of the saint himself, and they say that whoever goes to Mantralaya and sleeps there for 3 nights expressing some wish, that wish will be fulfilled because of the greatness of the aura that continues to operate at that place for 700 years after his passing. I think 700 years are not over yet, so you can go and see what happens. Such is the power of the knower of Brahman.

Kāmān yah kāmayate manyamānaḥ sa kāmabhir jāyate tatra tatra, paryāpta-kāmasya kṛtāmanas tu ihaiva sarve pravilīyanti kāmāḥ (3.2.2): If we desire anything, we will be born according to the nature of the desire. Inasmuch as every day we accumulate desires and go on piling them one over the other, and the duration of our lifespan is not long enough to permit us to enjoy all those desires, we die before the desires are fulfilled. Some of them are of course fulfilled, but many of them are not, and our unfulfilled desires will decide where we will be reborn. Therefore, it is up to each person to go on investigating into their own mind and probe into what kind of desires are inside – whether subtle or gross, visible or invisible, covert or overt. It is proper and good for everyone to make a list of all their desires if desires are there, though it is better if they are not there. If desires are there, we must fulfil them in this birth itself in some manner or we must sublimate them by higher means. One way or the other, desires should not be there at the time of passing; otherwise, the *jiva*, the *sushma sarira*, the mind and the senses will directly gravitate in the direction of that location where it is possible for the mind to fulfil its desires. So rebirth is unavoidable for those who entertain desires in their mind.

Kāmān yah kāmayate manyamānaḥ sa kāmabhir jāyate tatra tatra: Whatever be the desire, accordingly one will be reborn in that particular place corresponding to the nature of the desire; but if the desires are all dissolved here – paryāpta-kāmasya kṛtāmanas tu – if we have done whatever is to be done and there is nothing more for us to do in this world, if we have known whatever is to be known in this world and

there is nothing more to be known, and if we have seen and enjoyed things enough in this world and there is nothing more to be enjoyed, the desires melt instantaneously here at this very spot. All the desires melt into liquefied form, and they shall not cause any solidification of our mind in the form of rebirth.

Ihaiva sarve pravilīyanti kāmāḥ: Because of the fact all the desires are fulfilled, we are what is called *kratakritya, praptaprapya* and *jnatajneya*. *Kratakritya* is one who has done what is to be done, *praptaprapya* is one who has obtained what is to be obtained, and *jnatajneya* is one who has known what is to be known, and nothing more is left. Hence, the mind cannot have any occasion to desire another body for fulfilling itself because the mind itself will not be there when the desires go. It is good, therefore, to see that these desires melt. If there are desires, fulfil them and somehow or the other see that they are not there.

Nāyam ātmā pravacanena labhyo na medhayā, na bahunā śrutena: yam evaiṣa vṛṇute tena labhyas tasyaiṣa ātmā vivṛṇute tanūṁ svām (3.2.3): This verse also occurs in the Kathopanishad. It means that logical dispositions are not the means of knowing the Atman – not by intellection, not by academic knowledge, not by of scriptural study. It shall be known only by that person who is chosen by the Atman. If it is God's will that we should know him, we shall know him. It is the grace of God. Dhātu-prasādān mahimānam ātmanaḥ (Katha 2.20) is mentioned in the Kathopanishad. The grace of God is operating everywhere as events in this world, cosmic history and the fate of people. The past, present and future of every individual is written in the firmament of the cosmos; and therefore, it is up to us to devote ourselves to the Supreme Atman, the Soul of the universe, God Almighty, that we shall be in its good books.

Nāyam ātmā bala-hīnena labhyo na ca pramādāt tapso vāpy aliṅgāt etair upāyair yatate yas tu vidvāṁs tasyaiṣa ātmā viśate brahma-dhāma (3.2.4): A weakling cannot attain the Atman. The word 'bala-hīnena' has been used here in a different

sense. It does not mean that elephants will reach God and human beings will not because elephants have greater strength than humans. Here strength means toughness of the inner spirit. Of course it also means physical health, which is very necessary; but more than that, it means inner toughness of spiritual aspiration and the power of *tapas*, the strength of freedom from desire. All these are implied here by 'energy', 'strength', '*bala*', and whoever has not this *bala*, or strength, cannot attain the Atman. The Atman is great energy, power and potency; and that can be reached only by a powerful person, spiritually great in energy. Therefore, weaklings cannot reach the most powerful. Neither should we be physically weak, nor mentally, nor intellectually, nor spiritually, nor ethically. We should be strong in every field.

Na ca pramādāt: A heedless, careless and slipshod attitude towards the Atman will not take you there. How concentrated your mind has to be is mentioned here. Today I think of the Atman, tomorrow I think of the *anatman*; today I sleep away, tomorrow I shall do work; the day after tomorrow I shall eat, and go for a walk, then go on tour, and do every blessed thing distractedly, in a perfunctory manner. This is called *pramada* or careless behaviour. A person who is careless in his attitude towards the Atman will not reach it.

Tapso vāpy aliṅgāt: By any kind of ostentation, pretention, vainglorious appearance in public life, this is not to be attained. The great in society need not be really great in the eye of God. And austerities which are just physically oriented, and even torturous mental restraints, may not be adequate for the sake of the Atman because the highest *tapas* is love of God. *Mumukshutva* and all austerity converge in this intense longing, devotion, and any kind of *tapas* or austerity minus devotion or longing and ends only in a kind of mortification of the spirit will not lead us to the Atman.

Nāyam ātmā bala-hīnena labhyo na ca pramādāt tapso vāpy aliṅgāt etair upāyair yatate yas tu vidvāṁs tasyaiṣa ātmā viśate brahma-dhāma: All these methods that have been described earlier in this Upanishad have to be adopted. And we know

what these methods are. Satyena labhyas tapasā hy eṣa ātmā (2.2.5) etc. is mentioned in earlier verses. *Satya, ahimsa, brahmacharya, aparigraha, asteya* are one's powers. And the method of meditation has also been mentioned. By drawing the bow of the Pranava of the Upanishad and discharging the arrow of the Atman on the target of Brahman with the force of devotion, you shall find yourself merged in Brahman as an arrow merges in the object or the target. Unless intense meditation is carried on day in and day out for a protracted period, the knots of the heart cannot be broken, *avidya, kama, karma* cannot go, and the body may leave you at any time. Life is very short. And even in this short span of life, you do not know the length of life that is actually granted to you. It may end tomorrow, the day after, or two days after. A little grain of rice stuck in the throat will see you in heaven in one minute. So do not be proud of your glory, power, wealth, and the imaginary length of time in this world. Frail is this body, uncertain is life and, therefore, gird up your loins just now, and not tomorrow. There is a saying in Hindi – kal kare to aaj kar, aaj kare to aab: If there is something which you can do tomorrow, it is better you do it today itself, and if there is something which you can do it today, it is better to do it just now. Why postpone it until tomorrow? Tomorrow may not come at all.

Now the following verses, with which we will conclude the Upanishad, speak of the final attainment of the soul, unity with Brahman, the attainment of the final goal. How do we attain that? Some examples and illustrations are given here to make it clear as to how we unite ourselves with Brahman.

Samprāpyainam ṛṣayo jñāna-tṛptāḥ kṛtātmāno vīta-rāgāḥ praśāntāḥ, te sarvagaṁ sarvataḥ prāpya dhīrā yuktātmānas sarvam evāviśanti (3.2.5): Those who are calm and quiet in their minds, free from internal desires and external constraints of the senses, wanting nothing – those who have done everything that is to be done in this world and are ready to leave, bag and baggage, satisfied with knowledge only and wanting nothing else through knowledge, knowing knowledge as the final end in itself, realising that knowledge

is being and it is not an instrument for the acquisition of something outside – having attained the Atman by these means, the blessed souls enter into that which is everywhere, from all sides, and become all themselves. The soul, when it enters Brahman, enters into that which is everywhere; and enters not only from one direction or from one passage, it enters from all sides. When we enter a house, we enter through one door only, and not through all the doors. But the soul, inasmuch as it has expanded its dimension to infinity, enters Brahman, which is everywhere, from every side. From all ten directions, the soul will enter Brahman. And having entered it, the Atman becomes all things.

What is meant by 'all things'? This is a question of interpretation according to the school of thought. It may mean becoming all things, it may mean becoming the Supreme Absolute which is all things. This is a simple and plain answer. Or it may mean becoming all the fourteen worlds at one stroke so that in our very personality we will see the fourteen worlds scintillating as Virat Svarupa itself. Or it may mean that we are able to see ourselves in every little creature in this world, in every leaf, tree, stone and atom. The Sun, the Moon, the stars and the firmament – we will find ourselves spread out everywhere. So whatever be the manner in which we understand this state of affairs, the final significance is that the soul, having become infinite on account of total freedom from all desires, enters the Infinite. It is the Infinite entering the Infinite. Therefore, it enters in an infinite manner and becomes the Infinite itself. So the Infinite enters the Infinite in infinite ways, and becomes the Infinite. That is the meaning of this half verse: te sarvagaṁ sarvataḥ prāpya dhīrā yuktātmānas sarvam evāviśanti. It is a great blessedness to listen to these words. Even listening to these words and bestowing a little thought on what this means will purge us of all our sins and past karmas.

Vedāntā-vijñāna-suniścitārthāḥ saṁnyāsa-yogād yatayaḥ śuddhasttvāḥ, te brahma-lokeṣu parāntakāle parāṁṛtāḥ parimucyanti sarve (3.2.6): Those seekers, knowers, whose internal nature has been purified by a life of intense quest

and renunciation, and those who are well established in the Atman and who have been illumined by the knowledge of the Vedanta Shastra, whose minds have been fixed forever in one given direction, who have attained a conviction which is forever certainty and no shaking of that conviction is ever possible, such great souls reach Brahmaloka.

There are two kinds of *mukti* mentioned here. The earlier verse which we read just now describes *sadyomukti*. What we are reading now will describe *kramamukti*. *Sadhyomukti* is immediate liberation just here. Wherever we depart, whichever be the place where we die or cast off the body, at that very spot we merge into Brahman. If a drop in the ocean is to unite itself with the ocean, it need not have to travel some hundreds of kilometres to reach the ocean; it is just there. It dives into the very bosom of its own source the ocean. In a similar manner, the soul need not have to travel in some direction – go to the Sun, Moon, stars, etc. It dissolves here itself because that which it has to reach is at the very spot where it is. That is called *sadyomukti*, immediate liberation, which is very rarely obtained. It is attained with great difficulty by those most blessed ones who have no desires at all of any kind.

Otherwise, the lesser ones reach Brahmaloka gradually through the Devayana Marga, through the rays of the Sun, through the Sun, and then through lightning, and through a Mahapurusha who comes and takes the soul by the hand to Brahmaloka. It is said that this soul will remain in Brahmaloka for as long as this universe lasts, which means to say for such length of time as Brahma himself rules this cosmos. At the end of the universe – the *pralaya* or the ultimate dissolution of the cosmos – the universe is dissolved, and together with it Brahma also is dissolved. And when Brahma and the universe are dissolved in ultimate *pralaya*, the souls abiding there will also dissolve, and will attain absolute Brahman. Until that time they will be in the region of the Creator for as long as the Universe lasts. This is called *kramamukti,* the graduated system of attainment of liberation in the case of those who have *sattvic* desires, who

have done great *sattvic upasanas* and worshipped God with devotion but *sattvic* karma is still persisting and therefore they will not immediately merge with Brahman. They will reach up through the graduated scale prepared by *prakriti* through the *sattva guna*, and having reached Brahamaloka at the end of time, they merge with Brahman. Either way it is good; there is no harm. Let us go through Brahamaloka if we cannot have immediate liberation – te brahma-lokeṣu parāntakāle parāṁṛtāḥ parimucyanti sarve.

Gatāḥ kalāḥ pañcadaśa pratiṣṭhā devāś ca sarve prati-devatāsu, karmāñi vijñānamayaś ca ātmā pare'vyaye sarve ekī-bhavanti (3.2.7): All the faculties get dissolved. There are various faculties in us. There are five senses of knowledge, five senses of action, five *pranas*, and there is *manas, buddhi, ahankara, chitta*. These are the *kalas*, or the faculties. They suddenly melt like snow before the heating Sun.

Gatāḥ kalāḥ pañcadaśa pratiṣṭhā: Here fifteen faculties are mentioned, which are actually the five *pranas*, the five senses of knowledge, and the five senses of action. With the mind included, it becomes sixteen. But here fifteen are mentioned, and these fifteen or we may say sixteen *kalas* – all the perceptive and cognitive faculties – dissolve. Together with that dissolution, individuality itself dissolves.

Devāś ca sarve prati-devatāsu: All the divinities superintending over the sense organs also withdraw themselves. They also get dissolved because the locations of these gods are dissolved. When one's seat is gone, one has to quit that place. So the gods who were controlling our sense organs, our faculties – Brahma was ruling the intellect, Moon was ruling the mind, Rudra was ruling the ego, Vishnu was ruling the *chitta*, the Sun was ruling the eye, and so on – these gods will no longer have a function to perform; they return to their original sources, and the faculties merge.

Gatāḥ kalāḥ pañcadaśa pratiṣṭhā devāś ca sarve prati-devatāsu karmāñi vijñānamayaś ca ātmā pare'vyaye sarve ekī-bhavanti: Even our karmas are dissolved. We need not to pay penalties for what we have done because the fire of

knowledge has burnt all actions to ashes. The fire of knowledge can reduce to ashes even a mountain of sins. And the intellect, which is the seat of the ego, also goes with it. What happens? This individual soul, with all these appurtenances mentioned, with all its properties and belongings, psychically in their nature, go and settle themselves in that Imperishable Being and get united with it. This is the state of *moksha* – pare'vyaye sarve ekī-bhavanti.

Yathā nadyas syandamānās samudre astam gacchanti nāma-rūpe vihāya, tathā vidvān nāma-rūpād vimuktaḥ parāt-param puruṣam upaiti divyam (3.2.8): We attain to that Supreme Eternal Purusha and merge into that Purusha, uniting ourselves with that Supreme Being. As rivers flowing in different directions commingle with the ocean and we cannot know where what river is, all the *jivas* who have been liberated will melt into this great Atman, the Universal Being, as rivers melt in the ocean. As *nama* and *rupa*, names and forms, are dissolved in the ocean – Ganga is no more Ganga, Yamuna is no more Yamuna, and no river is there by its name and form because it is one mass of equality and merger – so this person, that person, this thing and that thing, whatever we see in this world, casts aside name and form. It is lifted above the encasement of names and forms in that big sea, and made to identify itself only with the vast ocean of Imperishable Being. Tathā vidvān nāma-rūpād vimuktaḥ: The knower of Brahman, having cast aside all names and forms, attains to that Supreme Being above all conceivable divinities in the cosmos. That supreme Purusha becomes our whole – parāt-param puruṣam upaiti divyam.

The Upanishad is over. You have attained the Supreme Brahman. What else do you want to hear now?

Sa yo ha vai tat paramam brahma veda brahmaiva bhavati, nāsyābrahma-vit kule bhavati, tarati śokaṁ tarati pāpmānaṁ guhā-granthibhyo vimukto'mṛto bhavati (3.2.9): If you know this Brahman, you shall become Brahman. Whatever you think you are, that you really are. If you know that your existence is inseparable from that Universal Brahman, you

shall become That. Whoever knows Brahman becomes Brahman.

Nāsyābrahma-vit kule bhavati: In case the knower of Brahman is a householder, no non-knower will be born in his family for seven generations because of the power of the realisation of this person. It is said that if one person in a family attains God, seven generations behind and seven generation ahead also will attain liberation by the power of this one person attaining Brahman. So parents should not cry if one son attains God. Tarati śokaṁ tarati pāpmānaṁ: You cross over sorrow, cross over all sins, and break all the knots of the heart. Guhā-granthibhyo vimukto'mṛto bhavati: Immortal nectar do you become.

Tad etat ṛcābhyuktam: kriyāvantas śrotriyā brahmaniṣṭhās svayaṁ juhvata ekaṛṣim śraddhayantaḥ, teṣam evaitām brahma-vidyāṁ vadeta śirovrataṁ vidhivad yais tu cīrṇam (3.2.10): This Upanishad is not to be taught to everybody. This is what this mantra says. We should not go on blabbering it in public, unless they are sufficiently purified in their minds to receive its import and meaning. Kriyāvantaḥ: Only those people who have performed their duties well in this life should listen to it. Otherwise, they will have a wrong notion of there being no duty in this world and will be like a half-baked pot or a raw vegetable, which is of no utility. They will be neither here nor there. Attainment of God does not mean violating duties and rules that bind us to the conditions in which we are.

The duties that we are expected to discharge in this world are the automatic consequence of the location of our personality in society. We must find out where we are actually seated. Our physical body, our mind and our very existence is conditioned by certain external atmospheres. We know very well what the requirements of our existence in the world are, and the sources which fulfil the requirements are those to which we owe some obligation. Somebody serves us, somebody protects us, somebody is taking care of us, somebody sees that we are secure. We know very well

how our life in this world is made possible by the operation of various social and natural factors. To those things, we owe an obligation.

Therefore, kriyāvantaḥ: those who have fulfilled their duties and discharged their obligations; śrotriyāḥ: who know very well the import of the scriptures and do not have any kind of misunderstanding about them; brahmaniṣṭhāḥ: whose mind is fixed in Brahman and who have no desire at all apart from that; svayaṁ juhvata ekaṛṣim śraddhayantaḥ: who have performed those sacrifices that are expected to be performed through the stages of life that they have passed – Brahmacharya, Grihastha, Vanaprastha, Sannyasa, etc. Teṣam evaitām brahma-vidyāṁ vadeta: You shall speak this Brahma-vidhya, knowledge of this Upanishad, only to these people, and do not speak it to other people. Śirovrataṁ vidhivad yais tu cīrṇam: You should speak this Upanishad only to those who have performed *shirovrata*. The word '*shirovrata*' has been explained in various ways. It is said to mean the vow of the head. Some commentators say it is Sannyasa, as shaving the head or carrying fire on the head is also one form of sacrifice that is performed before one enters into the Sannyasa order. It is also called Mundaka Upanishad. Mundaka means shaving, *mund*, and so the word '*mundaka*' as well as the word '*shirovrata*' seem to imply that this Upanishad is intended only for Sannyasis, and those who have not discharged their duties as householders, Brahmacharis or whatever they are in the world under the conditions they are placed in life cannot become Sannyasis, and those who have desires in their mind also cannot become Sannyasis. But those who have fulfilled this condition, to them this Upanishad be taught, and only then this instruction will become properly fructified.

Tad etat satyam ṛṣir aṅgirāḥ purovāca, naitad a-cīrṇa-vrato'dhīte, namaḥ parama-ṛṣibhyo namaḥ parma-rṣibhyaḥ (3.2.11). At the very beginning of this Upanishad, Saunaka put a question to Angiras: What is that by knowing which everything can be known? And the whole Upanishad is an answer to that question, what is that by which we can know

all things. Thus is the answer which Angiras gave to Saunaka and all the Rishis who were there in the audience. And this was told in early days. Naitad a-cīrṇa-vrato'dhīte: One who has not fulfilled his duties, one who has not undergone the necessary discipline for this purpose, will not read this Upanishad. Namaḥ parama-ṛṣibhyo namaḥ parma-rṣibhyaḥ: Prostrations be to the great sages, prostrations be to the great sages who have given us this great knowledge of the Upanishad.

SANSKRIT VERSES

FIRST MUNDAKA – FIRST SECTION

ॐ ब्रह्मा देवानां प्रथमः संबभूव विश्वस्य कर्ता बुवनस्य गोप्ता ।
स ब्रह्मविद्यां सर्वविद्याप्रतिष्ठामथर्वाय ज्येष्ठपुत्राय प्राह ।।१ ।।

1. brahmā devānām prathamaḥ sambabhūva viśvasya kartā bhuvanasya goptā,
   sa brahma-vidyāṁ sarva-vidyā-pratiṣṭham arthavāya jyeṣṭha-putrāya prāha.

अथर्वणे यां प्रवदेत ब्रह्माऽथर्वा तां पुरोवाचाङ्गिरे ब्रह्मविद्याम् ।
स भारद्वाजाय सत्यवहाय प्राह भारद्वाजोऽङ्गिरसे परावराम् ।।२ ।।

2. artharvaṇe yām pravadeta brahmātharvā tām purovācāṅgire brahma-vidyam,
   sa bhāradvājaya satyavāhāya prāha bhāradvājo’ngirase parāvarām.

शौनको ह वै महाशालोऽङ्गिरसं विधिवदुपसन्नः पप्रच्छ ।
कस्मिन्नु बगवो विज्ञाते सर्वमिदं विज्ञातं भवतीति ।।३ ।।

3. śaunako ha vai mahāśalo’ṅgirasaṁ vidhivad upasannaḥ papraccha,
   kasmin nu bhagavo vijñāte sarvam idaṁ vijñātam bhavati iti.

तस्मै स होवाच । द्वे विद्ये वेदितन्ये इति ह स्म यद्ब्रह्माविदो
वदन्ति परा चैवापरा च ।।४ ।।

4. tasami sa hovāca: dve vidye veditavye iti ha sma yad brahmavido vadanti parā caivāparā ca.

तत्रापरा ऋग्वेदो यजुर्वेदः सामवेदोऽथर्ववेदः शिक्षा कल्पो
व्याकरणं निरुक्तं छन्दो ज्योतिषमिति ।
अथ परा यया तदक्षरमधिगम्यते ।।५ ।।

5. tatrāparā ṛg-vedo yajur-vedaḥ sāma-vedo'tharva-vedaḥ śikṣā kalpo
vyākaraṇaṁ niruktaṁ chando jyotiṣam—iti,
atha parā yayā tad akṣaram adhigamyate.

यत्तदद्रेश्यमग्राह्यमगोत्रमवर्णमचक्षुःश्रोत्रं तदपाणिपादं ।
नित्यं विभुं सर्वगतं सुसूक्ष्मं तदव्ययं यद्भूतयोनिं परिपश्यन्ति धीराः ।।६ ।।

6. yat tad adreśyam, agrāhyam, agotram, avarṇam, acakṣuḥ-śrotraṁ tad apāṇi-padam,
nityam vibhum sarva-gataṁ susūkṣmaṁ tad avyayam yad bhūta-yonim paripaśyanti dhīrāḥ.

यथोर्णनाभिः सृजते गृह्णते च यथा पृथिव्यामोषधयः संभवन्ति ।
यथा सतः पुरुषात्केशलोमानि तथाक्षरात्संभवतीह विश्वम् ।।७ ।।

7. yathorṇa-nābhiḥ sṛjate gṛhṇate ca, yathā pṛthivayām oṣadhayas sambhavanti,
yathā sataḥ puruṣāt keśalomāni tathākṣarāt sambhavatīha viśvam.

तपसा जीयते ब्रह्म ततोऽन्नमभिजायते ।
अन्नात्प्राणो मनः सत्यं लोकाः कर्मसु चामृतम् ।।८ ।।

8. tapasā cīyate brahma, tato'nnam abhijāyate,
annāt prāṇo manaḥ satyaṁ lokāḥ karmasu cāmṛtam.

यः सर्वज्ञः सर्वविद्यस्य ज्ञानमयं तपः ।
तस्मादेतद्ब्रह्म नाम रूपमन्नं च जायते ।।९ ।।

9. yaḥ sarvajñaḥ sarva-vid yasya jñānamayaṁ tapaḥ,
tasmād etad brahma nāma-rūpam annaṁ ca jāyate.

FIRST MUNDAKA – SECOND SECTION

तदेतत्सत्यं मन्त्रेषु कर्माणि कवयो यान्यपश्यंस्तानि त्रेतायां बहुधा संतति ।
तान्याचरथ नियतं सत्यकामा एष वः पन्थाः सुकृतस्य लोके ।।१ ।।

1. tad etat satyam: mantreṣu karmāṇi kavayo yāny apaśyams
tāni tretāyāṁ bahudhā santatāni,
tāny ācaratha niyatam, satyakāmā, eṣa vaḥ panthāḥ
sukṛtasya loke.

यदा लेलायते ह्यर्चिः समिद्धे हव्यवाहने ।
तदाज्यभागावन्तरेणाहुतीः प्रतिपादयेत् ।।२ ।।

2. yathā lelāyate hy arcis samiddhe havya-vāhane,
tad ājya-bhāvāv antareṇāhutiḥ pratipādayec chraddhayā-
hutam.

यस्याग्निहोत्रमदर्शमपौर्णमासमचातुर्मास्यमनाग्रयणमतिथिवर्जितं च ।
अहुतमवैश्वदेवमविधिना हुतमासप्तमांस्तस्य लोकान्हिनस्ति ।।३ ।।

3. yasyāgnihotram adarśam apaurṇamāsam acāturmāsyam anāgrayaṇam atithivarjitam ca,
   ahutam avaiśvadevam avidhinā hutam ā-saptamāṁs tasya lokān hinasti.

काली कराली च मनोजवा च सुलोहिता या च सुधूम्रवर्णा ।
स्फुलिङ्गिनी विश्वरुची च देवी लेलायमाना इति सप्त जिह्वाः ।।४ ।।

4. kālī karalī ca mano-javā ca sulhoitā yā ca sudhūmravarṇā,
   sphuliṅginī viśva-rūpi ca devī lelāyamānā iti sapta-jiḥvāḥ.

एतेषु यश्चरते भ्राजमानेषु यथाकालं चाहुतयो ह्याददायन् ।
तं नयन्त्येताः सूर्यस्य रश्मयो यत्र देवानां पतिरेकोऽधिवासः ।।५ ।।

5. eteṣu yaś carate bhrājamāneṣu yathā-kālaṁ cā hutayo hy ādadāyan,
   taṁ nayanty etās sūryasya raśmayo yatra devānām patir eko’dhivāsaḥ.

एह्येहीति तमाहुतयः सुवर्चसः सूर्यस्य रश्मिभिर्यजमानं वहन्ति ।
प्रियां वाचमभिवदन्त्योऽर्चयन्त्य एष वः पुण्यः सुकृतो ब्रह्मलोकः ।।६ ।।

6. ehy ehīti tam āhutayas suvarcasaḥ sūryasya raśmibhir yajamānaṁ vahanti,
   priyāṁ vācam abhivadantyo’rcayantya, eṣa vaḥ puṇyas sukṛto brahma-lokaḥ.

प्लवा ह्येते अदृढा यज्ञरूपा अष्टादशोक्तमवरं येषु कर्म ।
एतच्छ्रेयो येऽभिनन्दन्ति मूढा जरामृत्युं ते पुनरेवापि यन्ति ।।७ ।।

7. plavā hy ete adṛḍhā yajña-rūpā aṣṭādaśoktam avaram yeṣu karmā,
etac chreyo ye'bhinandanti mūḍhāḥ jarā-mṛtyuṁ te punar evāpiyanti.

अविद्यायामन्तरे वर्तमानाः स्वयं धीराः पण्डितं मन्यमानाः ।
जङ्घन्यमानाः परियन्ति मूढा अन्धेनैव नीयमाना यथान्धाः ।।८ ।।

8. avidyāyām antare vartamānāḥ svayaṁ dhīrāḥ paṇḍitam manyamānāḥ,
janghanyamānāḥ pariyanti mūḍhāḥ, andhenaiva nīyamānā yathāndhāḥ.

अविद्यायां बहुधा वर्तमाना वयं कृतार्था इत्यभिमन्यन्ति बालाः ।
यत्कर्मिणो न प्रवेदयन्ति रागात्तेनातुराः क्षीणलोकाश्च्यवन्ते ।।९ ।।

9. avidyāyām bahudhā vartamānā vayaṁ kṛtārthā ity abhi-manyanti bālāh,
yat karmiṇo na pravedayanti rāgāt tenāturāḥ kṣīṇalokāś cyavante.

इष्टापूर्तं मन्यमाना वरिष्ठं नान्यच्छ्रेयो वेदयन्ते प्रमूढाः ।
नाकस्य पृष्ठे ते सुकृतेऽनुभूत्वेमं लोकं हीनतरं वा विशन्ति ।।१० ।।

10. iṣṭapūrtam manyamānā variṣṭhaṁ nānyac chreyo vedayante pramūḍhāḥ,
nāksaya pṛṣṭhe te sukṛte'nubhūtvemaṁ lokaṁ hīnataraṁ vā viśanti.

तपःश्रद्धे ये ह्युपवसन्त्यरण्ये शान्ता विद्वांसो भैक्षचर्यां चरन्तः ।
सूर्यद्वारेण ते विरजाः प्रयान्ति यत्रामृतः स पुरुषो ह्यव्ययात्मा ।।११ ।।

11. tapaḥ śraddhe ye hy upavasanty araṇye śāntā vidvāṁso bhaikṣācaryaṁ carantaḥ,
    sūrya-dvāreṇa te virajāḥ prayānti yatrāmṛtaḥ sa puruṣo hy avyayātmā.

परीक्ष्य लोकान्कर्मचितान्ब्राह्मणो निर्वेदमायान्नास्त्यकृतः कृतेन ।
तद्विज्ञानार्थं स गुरुमेवाभिगच्छेत समित्पाणिः श्रोत्रियं ब्रह्मनिष्ठम् ।।१२ ।।

12. parīkṣya lokān karmancitān brāhmaṇo nirvedam āyān nāsty akṛtah kṛtena,
    tad vijñānārthaṁ sa gurum evābhigacchet samit-pāṇiḥ śrotriyam brahma-niṣṭham.

तस्मै स विद्वानुपसन्नाय सम्यक् प्रशान्तचित्ताय शमान्विताय ।
येनाक्षरं पुरुषं वेद सत्यं प्रोवाच तां तत्त्वतो ब्रह्मविद्याम् ।।१३ ।।

13. tasmai sa vidvān upasannāya samyak praśānta-cittāya śamānvitāya,
    yenākṣaram puruṣaṁ veda satyam provāca tāṁ tattvato brahma-vidyam.

SECOND MUNDAKA – FIRST SECTION

तदेतत्सत्यं यथा सुदीप्तात्पावकाद्विस्फुलिङ्गाः सहस्रशः प्रभवन्ते सरूपाः ।
तदाक्षराद्विविधाः सोम्य भावाः प्रजायन्ते तत्र चैवापि यन्ति ।।१ ।।

1. tad etat satyam:
   yathā sudīptāt pāvakād visphuliṅgāḥ sahasraśaḥ prabhavante sarūpāḥ,
   tathākṣarād vividhāḥ, saumya, bhāvāḥ prajāyante tatra caivāpi yanti.

दिव्यो ह्यमूर्तः पुरुषः सबाह्याभ्यन्तरो ह्यजः ।
अप्रणो ह्यमनाः शुभ्रो ह्यक्षरात्परतः परः ।।२ ।।

2. divyo hy amūrtaḥ puruṣah sa bāhyābhyantaro hy ajaḥ,
   aprāṇo hy amanāḥ śubhro akṣarāt paratah paraḥ.

एतस्माज्जायते प्राणो मनः सर्वेन्द्रियाणि च ।
खं वायुर्जोतिरापः पृथिवी विश्वस्य धारिणी ।।३ ।।

3. etasmāj jāyate prāṇo manaḥ sarvendriyāṇi ca,
   khaṁ vāyur jyotir āpaḥ pṛthivī viśvasya dhāriṇī.

अग्निर्मूर्धा चक्षुषी चन्द्रसूर्यौ दिशः श्रोत्रे वाग्विवृताश्च वेदाः ।
वायुः प्राणो हृदयं विश्वमस्य पद्भ्यां पृथिवी ह्येष सर्वभूतान्तरात्मा ।।४ ।।

4. aginr mūrdhā, cakṣuṣī candra-sūryau, diśaḥ śrotre, vāg vivṛtāś ca vedāḥ,
   vāyuḥ prāṇo hṛdayaṁ viśvam, asaya padbhyām pṛthivī hy eṣa sarva-bhūtāntarātmā.

तस्मादग्निः समिधो यस्य सूर्यः सोमात्पर्जन्य ओषधयः पृथिव्याम् ।
पुमान् रेतः सिञ्चति योषितायां बह्वी प्रजाः पुरुषात्संप्रसूताः ।।५ ।।

5. tasmād agnis samidho yasa sūryaḥ somāt parjanya oṣadhayaḥ pṛthivyām,
   putmān retas siñcati yoṣitāyām bahvīḥ prajāḥ puruṣāt samprasūtāḥ.

तस्मादृचः साम यजूंषि दीक्षा यज्ञाश्च सर्वे क्रतवो दक्षिणाश्च ।
संवत्सरश्च यजमानश्च लोकाः सोमो यत्र पवते यत्र सूर्यः ।।६ ।।

6. tasmād ṛcaḥ sāma yajūṁṣi dīkṣā yajñaś ca sarve kratavo dakṣiṇāś ca,
   saṁvatsaraś ca yajamānaś ca lokāḥ somo yatra pavate yara sūryaḥ.

तस्माच्च देवा बहुधा संप्रसूताः साध्या मनुष्या पशवो वयांसि ।
प्राणापानौ व्रीहियवौ तपश्च श्रद्धा सत्यं ब्रह्मचर्यं विधिश्च ।।७ ।।

7. tasmāc ca devā bhaudhā samprasūtāḥ sādhyā manuṣyāḥ paśavo vayāṁsi,
   prāṇāpānau vrīhi-yavau tapaś ca śraddhā satyam brahma-caryaṁ vidhiś ca.

सप्त प्राणाः प्रभवन्ति तस्मात् सप्तार्चिषः समिधः सप्त होमाः ।
सप्तेमे लोका येषु चरन्ति प्राणा गुहाशया निहिताः सप्त सप्त ।।८ ।।

8. sapta-prāṇāḥ prabhavanti tasmāt saptārciṣas samidhas sapta-homāḥ,
sapta ime lokā yeṣu caranti prāṇā guhāśayā nihitās sapta sapta.

अतः समुद्रा गिरयश्च सर्वेऽस्मात्स्यन्दन्ते सिन्धवः सर्वरूपाः ।
अतश्च सर्वा ओषधयो रसश्च येनैष भूतैस्तिष्ठते ह्यन्तरात्मा ।।९ ।।

9. ataḥ samudrā girayaś ca sarve asmāt syandante sindhavas sarva-rūpāḥ,
ataś ca sarvā oṣadhayo rasaś ca yenaiṣa bhūtais tiṣṭhate hy antar-ātmā.

पुरुषः एवेदं विश्वं कर्म तपो ब्रह्म परामृतम् ।
एतद्यो वेद निहितं गुहायां सोऽविद्याग्रन्थिं विकिरतीह सोम्य ।।१० ।।

10. puruṣa evedaṁ viśvaṁ karma tapo brahma parāmṛtam,
etad yo veda nihitaṁ guhāyāṁ so'vidyā-granthiṁ vikiratīha, saumya.

SECOND MUNDAKA – SECOND SECTION

आविः संनिहितं गुहाचरन्नाम महत्पदमत्रैतत्समर्पितम्।
एजत्प्राणन्निमिषच्च यदेतज्जानथ सदसद्वरेण्यं परं विज्ञानाद्यद्वरिष्ठं प्रजानाम् ॥१॥

1. āviḥ saṁnihitaṁ guhācaraṁ nāma mahat padam atraitat samarpitam,
   ejat praṇan nimiṣac ca yad eat jānatha sad asad vareṇyam param vijñānād
   yad variṣṭham prajānām.

यदर्चिमद्यदणुभ्योऽणु च यस्मिँल्लोका निहिता लोकिनश्च।
तदेतदक्षरं ब्रह्म स प्राणस्तदु वाङ्मनः।
तदेतत्सत्यं तदमृतं तद्वेद्धव्यं सोम्य विद्धि ॥२॥

2. yad arcimad yad aṇubhyo'ṇu ca, yasmin lokā nihitā lokinas ca,
   tad etad akṣaram brahma sa prāṇas tad u vāṇ manaḥ,
   tad etat satyam, tad amṛtam, tad veddhavyam, saumya, viddhi.

धनुर्गृहीत्वौपनिषदं महास्त्रं शरं ह्युपासानिशितं संधयीत।
आयम्य तद्भावगतेन चेतसा लक्ष्यं तदेवाक्षरं सोम्य विद्धि ॥३॥

3. dhanur gṛhīvtā aupaniṣadam mahāstraṁ śaraṁ hy upāsā-niśitaṁ saṁdadhīta,
   āyamya tad-bhāvagatena cetasā lakṣyaṁ tad evākṣaraṁ, saumya viddhi.

प्रणवो दनुः शरो ह्यात्मा ब्रह्म तल्लक्ष्यमुच्यते ।
अप्रमत्तेन वेद्धव्यं शरवत्तन्मयो भवेत् ।।४।।

4. praṇavo dhanuḥ, śaro hy ātmā, brahma tal lakṣyam ucyate,
apramattena veddhavyam, śaravat tanmayo bhavet.

यस्मिन्द्यौः पृथिवी चान्तरिक्षमोतं मनः सह प्राणैश्च सर्वैः ।
तमेवैकं जारथ आत्मानमन्या वाचो विमुञ्चथामृतस्यैष सेतुः ।।५।।

5. yasmin dyauḥ pṛthivī cāntrikṣam otam manaḥ saha prāṇaiś ca sarvaiḥ,
tam evaikaṁ jānatha ātmānam, anya vāco vimuñcatha, amṛtasyaiṣa setuḥ.

अरा इव रथनाभौ संहता यत्र नाड्यः स एषोऽन्तश्चरते बहुधा जायमानः ।
ओमित्येवं ध्यायथ आत्मानं स्वस्ति वः पाराय तमसः परस्तात् ।।६।।

6. arā iva ratha-nābhau saṁhatā yatra nāḍyaḥ sa eṣo’ntaś carate bahudhā jāyamānaḥ,
aum iti eveṁ dhyāyathātmānam, svasti vaḥ pārāya tamasaḥ parastāt.

यः सर्वज्ञः सर्वविद्यस्यैष महिमा भुवि ।
दिव्ये ब्रह्मपुरे ह्येष व्योम्न्यात्मा प्रतिष्ठितः ।।
मनोमयः प्राणशरीरनेता प्रतिष्ठितोऽन्ने हृदयं सन्निधाय ।
तद्विज्ञानेन परिपश्यन्ति धीरा आनन्दरूपममृतं यद्विभाति ।।७।।

7. yah sarvajñaḥ sarva-vid yasyaiṣa mahimā bhuvi,
divye brahma-pure hy eṣa vyomny ātmā pratiṣṭhitaḥ.
mano-mayaḥ prāṇa-śarīra-netā pratiṣṭhito’nne hṛdayaṁ

sannidhāya,
tad vijñānena paripaśyanti dhīrāḥ ānanda-rūpam amṛtaṁ yad vibhāti.

भिद्यते हृदयग्रन्थिश्छिद्यन्ते सर्वसंशयाः ।
क्षीयन्ते चास्य कर्माणि तस्मिन्दृष्टे परावरे ।।८ ।।

8. bhidyate hṛdaya-granthiś chidyante sarva-saṁśayāḥ,
kṣīyante cāsya karmāṇi tasmin dṛṣṭe parāvare.

हिरण्मये परे कोशे विरजं ब्रह्म निष्कलम् ।
तच्छुभ्रं ज्योतिषां ज्योतिस्तद्यदात्मविदो विदुः ।।९ ।।

9. hiraṇmaye pare kośe virajaṁ brahma niṣkaram,
tac chubhraṁ jyotiṣāṁ jyotiḥ tad yad ātma-vido viduḥ.

न तत्र सूर्यो भाति न चन्द्रतारकं नेमा विद्युतो भान्ति कुतोऽयमग्निः ।
तमेव भान्तमनुभाति सर्वं तस्य भासा सर्वमिदं विभाति ।।१० ।।

10. na tatra sūryo bhāti, na candra-tārakam, nemā vidyuto bhānti, kuto’yam agniḥ,
tam eva bhāntam anubhāti sarvam, tasya bhāsā sarvam, idaṁ vibhāti.

ब्रह्मैवेदममृतं पुरस्ताद्ब्रह्म पश्चाद्ब्रह्म दक्षिणतश्चोत्तरेण ।
अधश्चोर्ध्वं च प्रसृतं ब्रह्मैवेदं विश्वमिदं वरिष्ठम् ।।११ ।।

11. brahmaivedam amṛtam purastād brahma, paścad brahma, dakṣinataś cottareṇa,
 adhaścordhvaṁ ca prasṛtam brahmaivedaṁ viśvam idaṁ variṣṭham.

THIRD MUNDAKA – FIRST SECTION

द्वा सुपर्णा सयुजा सखाया समानं वृक्षं परिषस्वजाते तयोरन्यः पिप्पलं स्वाद्वत्त्यनश्नन्नन्यो अभिचाकशीति ।।१ ।।

1. dvā suparṇā sayujā sakhāyā samānaṁ vṛkṣam pariṣasvajāte, tayor anyaḥ pippalaṁ svādv atty anaśnann anyo’bhicakaśīti.

समाने वृक्षे पुरुषो निमग्नोऽनीशया शोचति मुह्यमानः ।
जुष्टं यदा पश्यत्यन्यमीशमस्य महिमानमिति वीतशोकः ।।२ ।।

2. samāne vṛkṣe puruṣo nimagno’nīśayā śocati muhyamānaḥ, juṣṭam yadā paśyaty anyam īśam asya mahimānam iti, vīta-śokah.

यदा पश्यः पश्यते रुक्मवर्णं कर्तारमीशं पुरुषं ब्रह्मयोनिम् ।
तदा विद्वान्पुण्यपापे विधूय निरञ्जनः परमं साम्यमुपैति ।।३ ।।

3. yadā paśyaḥ paśyate rukma-varṇaṁ kartāram īśam puruṣam brahma-yonim,
tadā vidvān puṇya-pāpe vidhūya nirañjanaḥ paramaṁ sāmyam upaiti.

प्राणो ह्येष यः सर्वभूतैर्विभाति विजानन्विद्वान्बवते नातिवादी ।
आत्मक्रीड आत्मरतिः क्रियावानेष ब्रह्मविदां वरिष्ठः ॥४॥

4. prāṇo hy eṣa yaḥ sarva-bhūtair vibhāti vijānan vidvān bhavate nātivādī,
   ātma-krīḍa ātma-ratiḥ kriyāvān eṣa brahma-vidāṁ viriṣṭhah.

सत्येन लभ्यस्तपसा ह्येष आत्मा सम्यग्ज्ञानेन ब्रह्मचर्येण नित्यम् ।
अन्तःशरीरे ज्योतिर्मयो हि शुभ्रो यं पश्यन्ति यतयः क्षीणदोषाः ॥५॥

5. satyena labhyas tapasā hy eṣa ātmā samyag-jñānena brahmacharyeṇa nityam,
   antaḥ-śarīre jyotir-mayo hi śubhro yam paśyanti yatayaḥ kṣīṇadoṣāḥ.

सत्यमेव जयते नानृतं सत्येन पन्था विततो देवयानः ।
येनाक्रमन्त्यृषयो ह्याप्तकामा यत्र तत्सत्यस्य परमं निधानम् ॥६॥

6. satyam eva jayate nānṛtam, satyena panthā vitato deva-yānaḥ,
   yenākramanty ṛṣayo hy āpta-kāmā yatra tat satyasya paramaṁ nidhānam.

बृहच्च तद्दिव्यमचिन्त्यरूपं सूक्ष्माच्च तत्सूक्ष्मतरं विभाति ।
दूरात्सुदूरे तदिहान्तिके च पश्यत्स्विहैव निहितं गुहायाम् ॥७॥

7. bṛhac ca tad divyam acintya-rūpaṁ sūkṣmāc ca tat sūkṣma-taraṁ vibhati,
   dūrāt sudūre tad ihāntike ca paśyatsv ihaiva nihitam guhāyām.

न चक्षुषा गृह्यते नापि वाचा नान्यैर्देवैस्तपसा कर्मणा वा।
ज्ञानप्रसादेन विशुद्धसत्त्वस्ततस्तु तं पश्यते निष्कलं ध्यायमानः ।।८ ।।

8. na cakṣuṣā gṛhyate nāpi vācā nānyair devaiḥ tapasā karmaṇā vā,
jñāna-prasādena viśuddha-sattvas tatas tu taṁ pasyate niṣkalaṁ dhyāyamānaḥ.

एषोऽणुरात्मा चेतसा वेदितव्यो यस्मिन्प्राणः पञ्चधा संविवेश।
प्राणैश्चित्तं सर्वमोतं प्रजानां यस्मिन्विशुद्धे विभवत्येष आत्मा ।।९ ।।

9. eṣo'ṇur ātmā cetasā veditavyo yasmin prāṇaḥ pañcadhā saṁviveśa,
prāṇaiś cittaṁ sarvaṁ otam prajānām, yasmin viśuddhe vibhavaty eṣa ātmā.

यं यं लोकं मनसा संविभाति विशुद्धसत्वः कामयते यांश्च कामान्।
तं तं लोकं जयते तांश्च कामांस्तस्मादात्मज्ञं ह्यर्चयेद् भूतिकामः ।।१० ।।

10. yam yaṁ lokam manasā saṁvibhātiviśuddha-sattvaḥ kāmayate yāṁś ca kāmān,
taṁ taṁ lokaṁ jāyate tāṁś ca kāmāṁs tasmād ātmajñaṁ hy arcayed bhūti-kāmaḥ.

THIRD MUNDAKA – SECOND SECTION

स वेदैतत्परमं ब्रह्म धाम यत्र विश्वं निहितं भाति शुभ्रम् ।
उपासते पुरुषं ये ह्याकामास्ते शुक्रमेतदतिवर्तन्ति धीराः ।।१ ।।

1. sa vedaitat paramam brahma dhāma yatra viśvaṁ nihitam bhāti śubhram,
   upāste puruṣam ye hy akāmās te śukram etad ativartanti dhīrāḥ.

कामान्यः कामयते मन्यमानः स कामभिर्जायते तत्र तत्र ।
पर्याप्तकामस्य कृतात्मनस्तु इहैव सर्वे प्रविलीयन्ति कामाः ।।२ ।।

2. kāmān yah kāmayate manyamānaḥ sa kāmabhir jāyate tatra tatra,
   paryāpta-kāmasya kṛtāmanas tu ihaiva sarve pravilīyanti kāmāḥ.

नायमात्मा प्रवचनेन लभ्यो न मेधया न बहूना श्रुतेन ।
यमेवैष वृषुते तेन लभ्यस्तस्यैष आत्मा विवृणुते तनूं स्वाम् ।।३ ।।

3. nāyam ātmā pravacanena labhyo na medhayā, na bahunā śrutena,
   yam evaiṣa vṛṇute tena labhyas tasyaiṣa ātmā vivṛṇute tanūṁ svām.

नायमात्मा बलहीनेन लभ्यो न च प्रमादात्तपसो वाप्यलिङ्गात् ।
एतैरुपायैर्यतते यस्तु विद्वांस्तस्यैष आत्मा विशते ब्रह्मधाम ।।४ ।।

4. nāyam ātmā bala-hīnena labhyo na ca pramādāt tapso vāpy aliṅgāt,

etair upāyair yatate yas tu vidvāṁs tasyaiṣa ātmā viśate brahma-dhāma.

संप्राप्यैनमृषयो ज्ञानतृप्ताः कृतात्मानो वीतरागाः प्रशान्ताः ।
ते सर्वगं सर्तः प्राप्य धीरा युक्तात्मानः सर्वमेवाविशन्ति ।।५ ।।

5. samprāpyainam ṛṣayo jñāna-tṛptāḥ kṛtātmāno vīta-rāgāḥ praśāntāḥ,
   te sarvagaṁ sarvataḥ prāpya dhīrā yuktātmānas sarvam evāviśanti.

वेदान्तविज्ञानसुनिश्चितार्थाः संन्यासयोगाद्यतयः शुद्धसत्त्वाः ।
ते ब्रह्मलोकेषु परान्तकाले परामृताः परिमुच्यन्ति सर्वे ।।६ ।।

6. vedāntā-vijñāna-suniścitārthāḥ saṁnyāsa-yogād yatayaḥ śuddhasttvāḥ,
   te brahma-lokeṣu parāntakāle parāṁṛtāḥ parimucyanti sarve.

गताः कलाः पञ्चदश प्रतिष्ठा देवाश्च सर्वे प्रतिदेवतासु ।
कर्माणि विज्ञानमयश्च आत्मा परेऽव्यये सर्व एकीबवन्ति ।।७ ।।

7. gatāḥ kalāḥ pañcadaśa pratiṣṭhā devāś ca sarve prati-devatāsu,
   karmāñi vijñānamayaś ca ātmā pare’vyaye sarve ekī-bhavanti.

यथा नद्यः स्यन्दमानाः समुद्रेऽस्तं गच्छन्ति नामरूपे विहाय ।
तथा विद्वान्नामरूपाद्विमुक्तः परात्परं पुरुषमुपैति दिव्यम् ।।८ ।।

8. yathā nadyas syandamānās samudre astam gacchanti nāma-rūpe vihāya,
   tathā vidvān nāma-rūpād vimuktaḥ parāt-param puruṣam upaiti divyam.

स यो ह वै तत्परमं ब्रह्म वेद ब्रह्मैव भवति नास्याब्रह्मवित्कुले भवति।
तरति शोकं तरति पाप्मानं गुहाग्रन्थिभ्यो विमुक्तोऽमृतो भवति।।९।।

9. sa yo ha vai tat paramam brahma veda brahmaiva bhavati, nāsyābrahma-vit kule bhavati,
   tarati śokaṁ tarati pāpmānaṁ guhā-granthibhyo vimukto’mṛto bhavati.

क्रियावन्तः श्रोत्रिया ब्रह्मनिष्ठाः स्वयं जुह्वत एकर्षिं श्रद्धयन्तः।
तेषामेवैतां ब्रह्मविद्यां वदेत शिरोव्रतं विधिवद्यैस्तु चीर्णम् ।।१०।।

10. tad etat ṛcābhyuktam:
    kriyāvantas śrotriyā brahmaniṣṭhās svayaṁ juhvata ekaṛṣim śraddhayantaḥ,
    teṣam evaitām brahma-vidyāṁ vadeta śirovrataṁ vidhivad yais tu cīrṇam.

तदेतत्सत्यमृषिरङ्गिराः पुरोवाच नैतदचीर्णव्रतोऽधीते।
नमः परमऋषिभ्यो नमः परमऋषिभ्यः।।११।।

11. tad etat satyam ṛṣir aṅgirāḥ purovāca, naitad a-cīrṇa-vrato’dhīte,
    namaḥ parama-ṛṣibhyo namaḥ parma-rṣibhyaḥ.